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The Shape of Things

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WALL STREET ECHOES FATHER DIVINE—peace, it's wonderful! Within a week of the Munich agreement the Stock Exchange recovered all the ground lost during the international crisis and began to discount a further measure of recovery. Without attaching undue weight to Wall Street's elasticity, it seems clear that the recovery which set in last June has not yet lost its momentum. It is equally certain that business improvement is still decidedly spotty and has a long way to go before loud cheers become justified. There is little sign so far of an increase in real capital investment, which most economists believe is essential for a prolonged recovery. Heavy industry remains largely dependent on government contracts, which are rising sharply as the pump-priming program develops. Thus engineering construction awards are consistently running above 1937 figures, with last month's total the best for any September since 1929. But while public construction is 37 per cent above a year ago, private awards are 28 per cent lower. The new-issue market was checked by the war scare but currently enjoys good prospects. This financing, however, is largely of a refunding nature and represents only a meager amount of new real investment. At the moment, therefore, government expenditure is the mainstay of both consumer and capital-goods industries. With inventories still declining in many lines, there is danger that as the government program approaches its peak next spring demand will temporarily outrun supply in some lines. Such an eventuality appears to have been the inspiration of the Presidential warning last week against letting prices go through the roof. If business is far-sighted, it will heed these words and use the coming months, while public spending sustains recovery, to prepare to meet a rising demand without such a strain on facilities as will start new price inflation.

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THE CRY OF STATES' RIGHTS WAS NEVER more hypocritically raised than in the current outcry by the Governors of Vermont and New Hampshire over federal proposals to aid in flood control. As between the

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risk of flood and the "risk" of building dams that might generate electric power, these New England stalwarts unhesitatingly choose the former. New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut some time ago framed a flood-control compact. "The compact commissioners had kept the power question out of the flood-control plan, believing that the reservoirs it proposed to create were valueless for power." Congress refused to ratify the compact. Now President Roosevelt's $11,000,000 flood-control program is assailed by Governor Aiken of Vermont and Governor Murphy of New Hampshire out of fear that it might become the basis for a "little TVA" in New England. We hesitate to accuse Their Excellencies of being more anxious to protect the private power companies from competition than their own people from floods, but we find it hard to take their high-sounding protests at face value. "Much as we need these protective dams," Governor Murphy said, "we cannot sell our inherent rights." We wonder whether Governor Murphy is as unwilling to sell his state's "inherent rights" in power-producing streams to private companies.

✶

MEXICAN AMBASSADOR NAJERA'S HURRIED trip home has raised hope of a possible settlement of the troublesome Mexican land issue. The basis for compromise which is said to have emerged as a result of protracted conversations between Najera and Secretary of State Hull involves the earmarking of certain governmental revenues, to be used as eventual payment for the expropriated land. Arbitration is to be carried on under the terms of the Gondra Treaty as requested by President Cárdenas. Meanwhile, the United States is asking Mexico to agree that in the future expropriations will not be made without some provision for immediate payment. This is a far cry from Secretary Hull's original demand that the principle of immediate payment be applied retroactively. If an agreement is eventually reached, Mr. Hull will deserve credit for coming down off his high horse and facing Mexico's problems in a thoroughly realistic manner.

✶

THE MEMORANDUM ON EUROPE'S CRISIS issued by the National Peace Conference is as startling for its cynicism as for its naivete. As the unanimous declaration of America's most influential peace societies, the document mirrors the prostration which has afflicted European democrats; it lacks, however, even that remorse and foreboding which accompanied Europe's sighs of relief. Although it grants that some aspects of the future are still unclear, the statement expresses hope that "the Munich conference may lead to a complete new deal in international relations." The Czechs are paid generous tribute as a "brave people" and are assured that "out of it all has emerged a nation of increased spiritual stature, a nation which commands and will receive the respect and admiration of the world." It is difficult to imagine a document more at variance with the already visible consequences of the Munich agreement; nowhere is there any rebuke for those who sold Czechoslovakia into fascism or any recognition of the class interests which motivated the betrayal. Instead, there are elaborate proposals for a general international settlement in the same spirit of peace at any price in the territory of defenseless nations. Few approaches to the question of world peace could be less opportune or more suicidal.

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AFTER WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN EUROPE WE should do well to consider seriously the testimony on Nazi activities in this country offered the Dies committee by Arnold Gingrich, editor of *Ken, Esquire,* and *Coronet,* and John C. Metcalfe, a special investigator. That the Gestapo has a branch in the United States, that the Bund is seeking to organize other fascist groups into one united movement, that the Silver Shirts sought to make contact with Tom Girdler—all this is far from incredible. The spread of anti-Semitism in the United States is a particularly important objective of Nazi foreign policy, for it offers the best way to combat growing American dislike of the Reich. A majority of German-Americans are now hostile to Hitler, as the United German Societies demonstrated by barring Nazis from participation in New York City's German Day celebration. The attack made by war veterans on a Bund meeting at which Fritz Kuhn was to speak in Union City, New Jersey, is another case in point and shows how far anti-Nazi feeling may go. While we may be gratified at the sentiment, however, we have nothing but condemnation for the veterans' method of expression. The way to deal with the Bund is not by vigilantism but by legislation against political armies and by thorough exposure—the kind of exposure which the Dies committee is neither disposed nor equipped to make. We hope the new Congress will authorize a liberal and trustworthy investigation into fascist activities. We should like more light in particular on the charge that certain American industrialists have been aiding the Nazis and on the activities of Italian Fascist agents in this country as described by Mr. Schnapper elsewhere in this issue.

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IN THE PAST WEEK PALESTINE'S WAR HAS assumed proportions fully as alarming as those predicted in Mr. Viton's article in *The Nation* for October 1. On October 2 a rebel Arab band descended on the peaceful little town of Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee and killed nineteen Jews, including eleven children. In retaliation, British troops, supported by airplanes, tracked down the Arabs and killed more than a hundred in two days of fierce fighting. A fresh bombing outrage has occurred in

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Jaffa; attacks on Jews have become daily occurrences throughout the country. Faced by conditions that have long since got out of control, Sir Harold MacMichael, High Commissioner for Palestine, has returned to London, where Jews believe new capitulations to armed force are being considered. Support for this belief is found in the fact that Taufik al-Suwaidi, Iraq's Foreign Minister and one of the leading Arab spokesmen, is also in London and has been having frequent conferences with high British officials on the Palestine situation. The Iraqi statesman is understood to have urged an early statement by Britain to the effect that the Balfour Declaration was not meant to say what it very plainly did say, but was only intended to suggest that the Jews might have an "intellectual" national home in Palestine. With British prestige already at its lowest ebb in history as a result of the Munich agreement, Chamberlain can ill afford to give further proofs of weakness in handling the Palestine crisis.

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THE PROXY INVESTIGATION WITH WHICH the monopoly inquiry is beginning its work was inspired by the sensational battle last spring between the rarely challenged House of Morgan and two youthful freelancers for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, the one profitable road still left in the old Van Sweringen "empire." The securities that control this $3,000,000,000 network were sold at auction in September, 1935; Robert R. Young and Allan P. Kirby eventually obtained—for $250,000—the holding-company tail that wags this huge dog. They dominate Alleghany Corporation, which holds 70 per cent of the stock of Chesapeake Corporation, which in turn holds 30 per cent of the stock of Chesapeake and Ohio, an amount sufficient under ordinary circumstances to insure control of the road. But with the whole "empire" hopelessly tangled in the bankruptcy courts Young and Kirby found themselves unable to vote the stock held by Chesapeake Corporation. The Morgan firm, which financed the Van Sweringens, did not intend to let Chesapeake and Ohio, the one profitable railroad in the whole network, slip from their hands. The fight ended in a compromise and a year's truce, but not before the attention of the SEC had been called to the methods by which proxies were being corraled. Managements, of course, have the inside track, make it hard for individual stockholders to obtain lists of their fellows, and use company funds to solicit proxies for their own perpetuation. But a large amount of floating stock in brokerage offices is at the disposal of powerful banking houses if they choose to discipline unruly managements. Full disclosure of the facts in the Chesapeake and Ohio fracas might lay the basis for reforms designed to protect not just the minority stockholders but the helpless and hapless majority.

Black Progress

THE fascist advance continues. The democracies, either to placate triumphant dictators or to strenthen their own powers of resistance, turn to totalitarian methods. Czechoslovakia, embittered by betrayal, now willy-nilly accommodates itself politically and economically to Berlin. The democrat Benes becomes a liability and goes, while the Prague Cabinet takes on a neo-fascist complexion and calls to the Foreign Office a diplomat on whom Hitler and Mussolini have been known to smile. The Slovaks, granted autonomy, rejoice in a reactionary clerical government.

Meanwhile the *Drang nach Osten* gathers speed. Walther Funk, Nazi Minister of Economics, who has superseded Schacht as Balkan drummer, finds his sales-talk doubled in impressiveness. The Yugoslavs, formerly doubtful of the value of the German barter agreements, have thought again. Turkey, a few weeks ago ranged definitely in the anti-Nazi camp, has been persuaded to accept a large credit.

In the West, democracy, sold abroad, cheapens at home. The Führer-like tactics which both Chamberlain and Daladier adopted during the crisis have apparently come to stay. British and French Parliaments are becoming automatic machines for the registration of *faits accomplis*. Both are now dismissed while their bosses seek to repeat their Munich triumph at the expense of Spain. Nor are totalitarian methods likely to be confined to the diplomatic field; signs and portents are not wanting of their application in other spheres.

Despite Chamberlain's pact with Hitler, despite his talk of peace in our time, Britain and France are going to make an intensified effort to build up their armed strength. Having by their sell-out of the Czechs added, in effect, a million men to the German army, they are now to attempt a desperate race to catch up. It is an action irresistibly reminiscent of Chaplin's efforts to mount a swiftly descending escalator.

A valuable study of the economic consequences of rearmament, just published by the Foreign Policy Association, shows that Britain and France respectively are already spending on armaments the equivalent of 6.6 per cent and 11 per cent of their national incomes, while in both countries taxes absorb over 20 per cent of the national income. These figures suggest that the existing burden is the limit they can bear without shifting their whole economy on to a war basis. Hence to enlarge their program they will be compelled to imitate totalitarian methods, to learn the principles of *Wehrwirtschaft*—war economics—that unique Nazi contribution to science.

But while the fear of fascism is the only possible warrant for magnified rearmament, the British and French governments cannot enlighten their people about the true nature of the enemy; to do so would not merely

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offend dictatorial susceptibilities but would be an admission that the critics of Munich were right. Hence the probability, as Churchill warned the House of Commons, of restrictions on freedom of speech and press.

Under their present leadership the democracies seem doomed to a confusion of purpose which can only undermine morale and foster defeatism. Not the least tragic feature of the situation is the lack of effective opposition. French socialism seems thoroughly demoralized, while British labor, neglecting strategy for tactics, hesitates to inject a sour note into the popular rejoicing over peace. Are they not, like Chamberlain, showing too little faith in their cause to take risks for it? Cannot determined and realistic leadership still forge among the democracies that dynamic unity so magnificently shown in Spain? If British and French labor leaders have no answer to this question they will rank with the Chamberlains and Daladiers among the makers of a new Dark Age.

Neville Chamberlain in Washington

HOW much responsibility President Roosevelt bears for the tragic setback that democracy suffered at Munich cannot yet be determined. That his share is a heavy one was suggested by Sumner Welles in a radio address delivered last week—and this interpretation is further borne out by what is known of the Administration's activities. The President's two messages to Hitler asking him to continue negotiations may not have been sent at the direct instigation of Mr. Chamberlain and may not have been as decisive in leading to Munich as Mr. Welles intimated; but the British Prime Minister hailed them with suspicious alacrity and warmth. Mr. Roosevelt's cable to Mussolini may not have been as fulsome in its praise of the Duce as Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen have suggested in their "Washington Merry-Go-Round" or as decisive as is whispered in some other quarters, but it unquestionably reinforced Mr. Chamberlain's frantic importunities.

The Munich pact and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia would have occurred without the President's last-minute intervention. The cards were stacked, and it is doubtful whether any eleventh-hour action could have given the Czechs a fair deal. But that the United States had a part in stacking the deck can hardly be denied. In the early days of the crisis the Administration attempted to indicate the extent to which the American people opposed aggression. Mr. Roosevelt's speech at Kingston, Ontario, and those which Ambassador Bullitt and Secretary Hull delivered in early September carried a clear intimation that the United States might not remain aloof in a war precipitated by fascist aggression. These statements were in line with the President's famous "quarantine" speech of last October and were noted in Berlin, Rome, and Toyko. Then, a week before Nürnberg, the President went out of his way to take back what he had previously said, declaring that we had no commitments of any sort in Europe. This statement, like Mr. Roosevelt's last-minute appeals, may have had little influence on events, since Hitler was already convinced that he could outbluff the democracies, but it destroyed any influence that the United States might have exercised in preventing or limiting the sell-out. It said, in effect, that none of the principles or issues at stake concerned us. When the most powerful democracy in the world, a nation which had played an important role in the establishment of Czechoslovakia and one which is not exposed to immediate aerial or other attack, intimated that it was indifferent to an assault on that country, its example could not fail to influence other nations less favorably situated.

If the United States had merely made an honest mistake, some excuse might be found in the extreme pressure of events. But there is no escape from the suspicion that the President's messages to the fascist leaders were sent at the suggestion, if not at the urgent request, of Mr. Chamberlain. It would not be the first time that the foreign policy of the United States was devised in Downing Street. Only last spring a definite decision on the part of the Administration to raise the embargo against the Spanish Republic was reversed at the behest of Mr. Chamberlain.

We would be last to deny that cooperation with Great Britain should be one of the objectives of a realistic foreign policy. But following Britain's lead regardless of the government that is in power, or of its program, cannot be defended on grounds of realism. Our State Department seems unable to distinguish between the Britain that believes in collective security and international cooperation—the Britain of the Peace Poll—and the anarchistic Britain of Simon, Hoare, and Chamberlain. It may be argued that the State Department can only cooperate with the Britain that happens to be in power. This is quite untrue. Lifting the Spanish embargo would have been a clear act of cooperation with the anti-fascist Britain that is our natural ally.

Having thrown Czechoslovakia to the wolves in order to placate Hitler, Mr. Chamberlain's Britain is now planning a fresh betrayal of Spain in order to conciliate Mussolini. The terms have been drawn up by the Duce. For a nominal withdrawal of Italian troops, Britain is to grant belligerent rights to Franco. At first sight it might be thought that this would be merely a moral victory for the rebels. British and other foreign ships are now being sunk in Loyalist ports. But most of the losses have been in Barcelona; farther south, in Cartagena, it has proved possible to protect most incoming

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ships. If Franco were granted belligerent rights, there would be nothing to stop him from "borrowing" Italian submarines and destroyers and establishing an effective blockade of all Loyalist ports. For the southern portion of Loyalist Spain at least this would be fatal.

President Roosevelt is in a strategic position to prevent this second betrayal. The whole plan would collapse if this country would lift its embargo against the Spanish Republic. Britain may be counted on to exert every effort to prevent this from happening. But Chamberlain is in a rather awkward position. During the recent war scare he is believed to have asked for assurance that the Neutrality Act would not be applied against Britain in the event of hostilities. It might be difficult, therefore, for him to press too hard for retention of the act in a civil war, where it was never meant to be applied.

Repeal or revision of the Neutrality Act must await the next session of Congress. But, as *The Nation* has repeatedly pointed out, the embargo against Spain can be lifted by the President without Congressional action. If Spain is to be saved and the Administration cleared of suspicion of Chamberlain domination, immediate steps must be taken to give the Loyalist government the rights to which it is entitled under international law. The President and the State Department must be made to feel, in these pre-election days, the full force of American public opinion.

Labor Marks Time

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S recommendation, in his message to the convention of the American Federation of Labor, that labor cease its warfare dramatizes once more the no man's land that separates A. F. of L. and C. I. O.—a no man's land in which industry and business have been quick to establish strategic emplacements from which to snipe at both contenders. What are the chances that his advice will be followed? What factors in the two labor camps are working for, and against, a reconciliation which every friend and defender of labor not only desires but has a right to demand?

An objective analysis of the present mood and status of the two organizations is in order. In the first year of the C. I. O., when it piled up an amazing growth of two millions, it seemed as if the A. F. of L. would soon follow the Knights of Labor into oblivion. But several unforeseen factors, external and internal, intervened. The new industrial unions for the unskilled were by their very nature particularly exposed to the ravages of the "recession" that set in some months later. At the same time the growing conflict with the A. F. of L. and internal struggles for power, particularly in the United Automobile Workers, took their toll of morale and strength.

In spite of difficulties the C. I. O. has hung up an amazing record—but the A. F. of L. is stronger than it was two years ago, its membership having risen as a result of the wave of organization. Today the two groups stand formidably matched in numbers. At the top, at least, there is bitterness on both sides. The A. F. of L. executive council made a valiant effort to keep Daniel Tobin's plea for a new peace move out of debate at Houston, though it obviously reflects strong rank-and-file sentiment. John L. Lewis's call for a C. I. O. convention, coming as it did after and not before President Roosevelt's appeal for conciliation, would seem to indicate that Lewis is determined to establish the C. I. O. as a formal rival of the A. F. of L.—which would certainly freeze the present deadlock and make peace more difficult. Incidentally, it will bring to a head his conflict with Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, whose nostalgia for the A. F. of L. has continued to exist side by side with an uncompromising belief in industrial unionism. It is unlikely that the garment workers will take part in the C. I. O. convention, at which a permanent organization will presumably be substituted for what has remained technically at least a provisional committee.

Lewis's reported move for centralization, meanwhile, serves to stress the one element in the A. F. of L. which has kept it from being the unified enemy of the C. I. O. and industrial unionism that its most reactionary leaders have tried to make it. Because of the irrevocable autonomy of the federation, the C. I. O. has been able to enlist strong support from such individual and powerful A. F. of L. and former A. F. of L. unions as the I. L. G. W. U. and the Typographers, Maritime Workers, and Teamsters. Aside from the intrinsic desirability of autonomy and the dangers inherent in personal power, this demonstration of the advantages of self-determination and flexibility stands as a trenchant criticism of the drive for centralized power in the C. I. O. Space prevents an extended discussion of this issue at this time, but here as in every other field there exists the problem of achieving administrative efficiency, which seems to require centralization, without permitting too great a concentration of personal power.

For the rest, the deliberate vices of the A. F. of L. stand in dreadful contrast to its now involuntary virtue of autonomy—which unfortunately stops with the leadership of its component unions. Its continued attack on the National Labor Relations Board is nothing less than suicidal. Its campaign against the C. I. O. and its imposition of dues for that purpose on a rank and file which for the most part has no quarrel with the C. I. O. rank and file is criminal; while its formation of dual unions to combat an organization against which it professes to hold only the grievance of dual unionism damningly speaks for itself.

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Munich and the Americans

BY ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

WHAT Czechoslovakia means is clear enough to the American isolationists. We have sat through another performance of the great European classic. We have seen Hitler and Chamberlain divert the attention of the audience from a peculiarly gritty and unpleasant rape by calling off a peculiarly unlikely and preposterous war. We have seen the act succeed so brilliantly that the Labor opposition in Parliament cheers and the Archbishop of Canterbury bestows upon the sickening consequences the benediction of the Almighty. Nothing is left for us to do but to rise noisily from our seats, jam our hats over our ears, and stamp out of the theater.

What Czechoslovakia may mean to American history is another matter. This much, however, is certain: it will mean more than the theories of the isolationists would admit. Conceivably it will mean precisely the opposite of what the isolationists contend. Isolationism is only possible to a nation which is indifferent to the issues. The issue raised and determined at Munich is an issue to which this country can never be indifferent. It affects the existence of this nation as a nation and with it the national existence of every other state upon the American continents.

The issue is the issue of race. More specifically it is the issue of the relation of racial status to political status. The partition of Czechoslovakia by and with the consent of France and Great Britain has established as a principle of international action the proposition that a man's racial derivation establishes his political adherence. Members of a given race belong as a matter of right to the country of their racial origin, and the claim of right—which may be made, it should be observed, from either end—overrides all other claims. It overrides not only the claims of common morality and the claims of self-respect but the claims also of treaties and international commitments.

The acceptance of that proposition by the two great democracies of Western Europe, and its elevation to a principle of international action, is not and cannot be a matter of indifference to the nations of the Americas. For the nations of the Americas were established and are still maintained upon a proposition totally different. They were established upon the proposition that citizenship was a matter of free choice, that immigrants from Europe left their race behind them upon the docks of Boston or Buenos Aires or Valparaiso, and that the New World was to be settled by men of many racial stocks who would beget among themselves not another race but a people. Whitman has stated the emotional content of that proposition. It has been accepted so long and so completely in the United States that it is taken as a matter of course. It is the American Principle. To challenge it is to challenge the civilization of this hemisphere.

Munich challenges it for the first time in our history. Prior to Munich the racial superstitions of the Nazis were matters of complete indifference to the citizens—at least to the non-Jewish citizens—of the United States. It was more or less apparent to those who bothered to think about it that a theory of racial and political identity would ravel the vigorous stock of the New World back to its provincial origins in Europe. But so preposterous was that notion to most Americans that they dismissed it as idiotic nonsense. They had the word of those anthropologists and ethnologists who retained their honesty and their self-respect that race, in the Nazi sense of the term, existed nowhere, and least of all in the peopled and repeopled, conquered and reconquered forests of Germany. They had the word of their left-wing intellectuals that racial myths were quack political medicines and could safely be ignored. And they assumed, when they thought about the matter at all, that the racial theory, like its anti-Semitic practice, was merely an attempt to give point and content to a revolution which apparently had neither. A dictatorship of the proletariat is a paradox capable at least of meaning. A dictatorship of the race is merely paradox.

The consequence was that few North Americans saw the danger to America of the Nazi ideology. They believed, having been so instructed, that Nazi Germany concerned the Americans only in so far as it was fascist. They believed that the great issue of the time was the issue raised by the fascists upon the one side and the democracies upon the other. It did not occur to them that the real issue might be an issue nearer home—the issue posed between the American dream of the people and the Nazi superstition of the race.

The failure to make that observation was not the fault of the Nazis. From time to time during those years the Nazi doctrine was most explicitly enunciated and its American implication most expressly declared. In the late summer of 1937, for example, Göring said to a Congress of Germans abroad:

> The National Socialist government expects every German residing abroad to put the interest of his Fatherland before his own. You Germans abroad must remember that, wherever you are, you represent the interests of

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> Germany. Always remember that the Fatherland comes first and the rest of the world after. The German living abroad can be nothing else but a National Socialist.

Two months later, on October 25, 1937, Göring's official organ, *The Four-Year Plan,* carried an article by one Richard Csaki which was even more explicit. Demanding the organization of the thirty million Germans living abroad, Herr Csaki said:

> Foreign nations and foreign statesmen must recognize that in the future fruitful relationships between Germany and other world peoples can take place only on the basis of the organized activity of foreign Germans as natural agents of German culture and commerce. The Motherland, which now takes active responsibility for all members of its racial family, raises the questions: Upon which men of German blood can I lay claim, even if they are no longer conscious that they belong to us? Upon which can I depend to undergo all sacrifices and accept full responsibility in the present struggle of the whole German race?

Neither Herr Csaki nor General Göring frightened the citizens of the United States in 1937. For one thing Göring has always seemed to Americans something of a comic figure. For another the language was the language of Germanic bombast, which has invariably sounded tinny in American ears. And for still another there were several miles of water between Sandy Hook and the portentous Herr Csaki. The idea that the old Germans of St. Louis and Milwaukee with their enormous stake in the American continent and the American idea might be seduced to treason by rhetoric of that kind was merely silly. The New York *Times* gave a few inches to the matter, and most American papers ignored it.

General Göring

There were, however, signs, even as long ago as last fall, that the German design on the Americas, fantastic as it seemed, could not be ignored. In Chile, where Germans have been settled in peace and relative prosperity for years, the German settlements became restless. People who had thought of themselves as Chileans for generations began to think of themselves as Germans. A German-speaking radio station at Valdivia in the heart of the German area became so abusive of the Chilean state that the government was obliged to interfere. The same thing happened in Argentina, where 220,000 Argentines of German descent are leavened by 40,000 German citizens. Nazi Labor Fronts, Hitler Youth Groups, German-speaking Nazi schools became so common and so brazen that a large section of the Argentine press was aroused against them, with the result that a Nazi attempt to celebrate the Austrian *Anschluss* last April ended in a riot in which two Argentines were killed. In Brazil the activity of Nazi agents was sufficiently open in the winter of 1937-38 to provoke police intervention, and an international incident was avoided only because the German government, after protesting, backed down.

It was therefore apparent as long ago as last winter that the racial propaganda of the Nazis could cross sea water. But prior to the partition of Czechoslovakia the racial propaganda of the Nazis was propaganda and nothing more. It is Czechoslovakia and the acquiescence of Great Britain and France in the Nazi claim of racial right which raise that propaganda to the level of a principle of international action. The seizure of Austria was a gun-man seizure which established no precedents. The partition of Czechoslovakia is a "lawful" partition which establishes the racial claim of the Nazis as the master-principle in contemporary Europe. As such it becomes a present and pressing danger to Americans. Mr. Chamberlain has publicly congratulated himself, and has been piously congratulated by others, upon his success in avoiding war. He has avoided a war which no one wanted to wage, at the cost not only of certain priceless imponderables affecting his own country but to the injury as well of the basic conception underlying our own.

Those who imagine that we can still continue to relax in a self-righteous indifference to the Nazi conquests in Europe, those specifically who suppose that we can continue to despise Nazi racial theories because of the undoubted loyalty of the American Germans, will do well to ponder a further paragraph in Herr Csaki's remarkable paper. The loyalty of the Germans in America is not questioned. It was proved in the Army of the Tennessee, in the fighting in the Argonne, and in the peace between. But the loyalty of the Germans of America is not enough. There are various ways of turning Nazi in these times, and choice, as many a Sudetenlander could testify, is not the chief of them. Herr Csaki does not trouble to camouflage the automatic rifle and the length of rubber hose.

> The question of regaining as organic members of the German racial body those who seem to have forgotten their race is no longer theoretical. This issue is raised justifiably in view of National Socialist concepts regarding folk biology and race policy. Conscious German groups abroad must feel with the National Socialist ideology and eventually accept it whole-heartedly. Furthermore, we see now that people of German character everywhere, even if they are not conscious of their Germanism, can no longer avoid the necessity of considering the National Socialist ideology.

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Radio Comes Through

BY JAMES RORTY

DURING the past thirty days radio has been used in the attempt both to make war and to make peace, to rescue Western civilization and to push it over the abyss. The issue of life or death for millions of men, women, and children has hung, or seemed to hang, on the turn of a sentence or on the inflection of a voice, while all over the planet those millions have listened in terror and anguish.

A new dimension had been added to politics and diplomacy. For the first time history has been made in the hearing of its pawns. Radio has given them not only the words but the voices of the protagonists: Hitler, Benes, Chamberlain, Daladier, Mussolini.

The radio has our ears. It is scarcely too much to say that the future of civilization will be determined to a considerable degree by who rules radio and how.

In the absolute sense radio is not free in this country. But it is more nearly free, probably, than anywhere else in the world. The result has been that American radio—meaning the whole personnel and apparatus of our broadcasting system—delivered a day-by-day performance during the European crisis that can only be described as magnificent. In justice, the tribute should be extended to include the news services and the newspapers. The two services interlock and supplement each other of course. American newspaper correspondents were almost continuously on the air, speaking from European capitals. The newspapers an hour or two later gave the eye a chance to read and digest what the ear had heard; gave us the shaded maps that the radio can't give us this side of facsimile broadcasting or television. But in a number of important respects the radio gave us more than the newspaper.

Commercialism took a back seat during the crisis. Program after program was postponed or interrupted by flash bulletins and special broadcasts. All three networks report their belief that virtually all their affiliated stations used practically in full the enormously expanded news, news commentary, flash bulletin, and foreign-broadcast service that went on the air. From coast to coast the small hamlet and the isolated farm heard what New York heard, and for the most part with equally good reception.

In the network studios and offices the technical and program staffs worked almost continuously, ate and slept where and when they could. One of the most overworked men in the country was Columbia's sixty-year-old H. V. Kaltenborn, dean of American news commentators, son of an officer of the Hessian Guard who emigrated to America after the *Anschluss* of Prussia and Hesse. Kaltenborn hung up the almost incredible record of fifty hours on duty between September 10 and September 29—all of his talks "ad libbed" from rough notes or without notes, all of them poised, accurate, and expertly timed, many of them brilliantly illuminating.

During this period 443 separate news broadcasts, including flash bulletins, were sent out over NBC's Red and Blue networks, taking fifty-eight hours and thirteen minutes of time on the air for both networks. This is an average of nearly three hours a day. Columbia's network sent out a total of fifty-four and one-half hours of news broadcasts. During the crisis, according to *Variety*, Columbia made 151 short-wave pick-ups from Europe, while NBC's total was 147. Mutual, which depended largely on the cooperation of foreign broadcasting stations in transmitting government news in English, including unedited but balanced official programs from Prague, Berlin, Paris, and Rome, rebroadcast more than 130 programs during the crisis. Press-Radio sent out 788 special bulletins, totaling 104,540 words. American citizens with nothing else to do could have listened during most of their waking hours to the "sound of history" as it poured out of their loud-speakers.

Kaltenborn perceived the approach of the crisis early. His August broadcasts for CBS were full of anxious and informed foreboding. During the first week of September the European representatives of the networks started signing up newspaper correspondents and emergency personnel.

Few of the millions who heard it will forget an NBC broadcast by Walter B. Kerr, New York *Herald Tribune* correspondent, describing with a kind of weary and tragic exaltation the retaking of the Sudeten districts, when Henleinists fled before the mobilized Czech army: "The sound of the tanks and the sun on the bayonets were enough to do the trick." So charged with emotion were Mr. Kerr's numbed, halting syllables that one expected them to be interrupted at any moment by the crash of a shell, marking perhaps the definitive beginning of the war.

An American passenger on a homeward-bound transatlantic liner heard a British voice from the loud speaker crying as if into an uncomprehending void: "This is London speaking. We can tell you now—I know it seems strange, I know you will laugh, but it seems very important to us here—that there will be no outbreak of general war for the next twenty-four, or perhaps even seventy-two, hours." Some of the passengers *were* laughing—while the British fleet was mobilizing, while Ger-

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man liners canceled their sailings or scudded back to home ports, while volunteers dug bomb shelters in the London parks.

On one occasion John T. Whitaker, Chicago *News* correspondent in Prague, found all wires stopped and took to the ether on short wave. WOR picked up his dispatch and telephoned it to his paper.

The strangest and perhaps the most fortuitous triumph on the air was Prime Minister Chamberlain's on his return from Godesberg, a broadcast which circled the globe on the British Broadcasting Corporation's empire hook-up. Listening for the authentic voice of the London City, and of empire, one heard instead an old man so exhausted and despairing that destiny seemed to be slipping through his fingers—he seemed unable to make peace or war. Possibly for this very reason the effect was to stiffen public sentiment in England, in the colonies, and in all the democratic countries. It had its effect in Germany too; BBC put a translated version on the air immediately. Not that the masses of the German people heard it; most of them had only their one-tube *Volksradio,* limited in reception to the output of the nearest Nazi propaganda "cannery." The few families that had dared to secrete more powerful sets feared the step of the radio warden whose duty was to round up audiences for official broadcasts and to arrest anybody caught listening to those from abroad. But the Nazi Party leaders and the German general staff undoubtedly did listen both to the Chamberlain broadcast and to everything else that went on the air, including the output of the American network short-wave transmitters. They heard Anthony Eden's speech at the Stratford-on-Avon meeting of the English-speaking Union, broadcast by Columbia in spite of Mr. Eden's reluctance but not broadcast by BBC to English or empire audiences. They heard during the three days between Godesberg and Munich the voice of world opinion rising in pitch and volume, and becoming more articulate and more menacing.

British and French radio—the former a government-controlled monopoly and the latter a mixed system of commercial and government stations—played a relatively timid, unenterprising, and heavily censored role during the crisis, serving inevitably as instruments of the cautious and uncertain policies of their respective Foreign Offices. Czech radio, of course, worked overtime to meet and counter the German radio offensive. On September 28 all three radio systems gave blanket permission to American networks to rebroadcast British, French, and Czech programs; Mutual took advantage of this permission eight minutes after it was announced. Mutual also distinguished itself by immediately transcribing important morning and afternoon broadcasts and rebroadcasting them during the more popular evening hours, a policy it had followed during the Vienna putsch.

Tribute was paid to the fine performance of the American networks in the September 29 issue of the British weekly news magazine *Cavalcade.* It said:

> The best information on the development of the international situation for many days past has come from American short-wave stations. Vivid on-the-spot relays from European capitals, plus expert commentaries by students of foreign affairs, have kept Americans abreast of events. Fortunate are those Britons who have receivers which bring in the Columbia broadcasts.

Nazi broadcasting stations were used continuously to implement the Führer's hypocritical banditry. Helplessly the Sudeten peasants, most of whom had wanted autonomy but scarcely the Nazi yoke, watched their sons listening as if hypnotized to Berlin screaming against "the Czech mass murderers," "the Hussite mob," the "red horde." Plenty of "jamming" attempts were made to blot out competing stations with code signals or static. Both Hitler's Nürnberg speech and Premier Hodza's speech were interrupted in this way.

With a desk load of scripts before me, I cannot attempt any detailed evaluation of the commentators. Besides Lowell Thomas, who read headlines and digested dispatches with his customary competence, NBC during the concluding week of the crisis had Leland Stowe, Stanley High, and John B. Kennedy for a score of broadcasts. Quincy Howe was conscripted by Mutual and gave a generally good account of himself. In his September 29 broadcast Bryce Oliver, who incidentally fully deserves the growing audience he is building for station WEVD, pointed out perhaps more clearly than any other commentator the interests of international capital as motivating the Franco-British surrender to Hitler. With this exception, however, the crisis was reported and interpreted on the air strictly from the capitalist point of view. True, we heard the voice of Maxim Litvinov echoed by Communist spokesmen everywhere. But his was not the voice of the social revolution which all the fevered statesmen, including President Roosevelt, so evidently feared if war came. Litvinov, too, spoke for a dictatorship struggling vainly to preserve its capitalist alliances. And if the microphone had been turned on the libertarian demonstrations in Paris which were shouting revolutionary slogans, both Moscow and Berlin would probably have hastened to "jam" the broadcast.

All three networks claim one or more scoops, the outstanding being Columbia's exclusive broadcast of Anthony Eden's speech, Mutual's pick-up of Chamberlain from the Croydon airport, and NBC's forty-six-minute priority in broadcasting the terms of the Munich peace.

It was the broadcasters' big chance to prove the validity of the "American system" of advertising-supported, privately owned broadcasting. They certainly went to

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town in a big way, and as a result some of our uncritical advocates of government ownership of radio are thrown back on their heels. But the conclusion that all is for the best in our best of all possible radio worlds and that our commercial broadcasters are animated by pure devotion to the public good is too simple. The radio coverage of the crisis was good not only because of the professional competence, sense of public responsibility, and devotion of the journalists and network executives who did the job but also because the radio networks and individual stations seized a glorious opportunity, first, to establish radio as our dominant system of news communication and thereby to consolidate a greater listening audience, and then to sell that audience to advertisers. The industry spent lavishly in covering the crisis (about $160,000 in all, plus an additional $35,000 in rebates to advertisers). It expects to get this expenditure back with interest. At the peak of the crisis one Midwestern executive stated that his station, which previously carried eight scheduled news broadcasts a day, of which five or six were sponsored, now had only sponsored ones and a waiting list of advertisers who wanted to buy news programs. Since news and news commentaries are already among the most popular radio programs with both audiences and advertisers—during the week beginning March 6, 1938, 663 American stations used 8.5 per cent of their time on the air for news broadcasts—it is quite possible that the dissemination and interpretation of news will now be recognized as the most important function of the industry.

Will radio's continuous scooping of the newspapers during the crisis result in a renewal of the press-radio war? Possibly, but probably not. Newspaper circulation zoomed during the crisis, and many publishers believe that radio served to stimulate rather than limit newspaper sales. Moreover, the newspaper business is rapidly "joining" the radio business; close to 250 stations are now owned or controlled by newspaper interests. This trend, of course, suggests other problems affecting the public interest of a democracy.

One of the most interesting questions raised by radio's performance during the crisis is this: What would the performance have been if America had been directly involved? Or if it had been a domestic crisis involving a general strike or civil insurrection? The answer is found in Section 606-c of the Federal Communications Act:

> Upon proclamation by the President that there exists war or a threat of war or a state of public peril or disaster or other national emergency, or in order to preserve the neutrality of the United States, the President may suspend or amend for such time as he sees fit the rules . . . may close any studios, may authorize their use or control by any department of government.

This sword of Damocles hangs over the American system of broadcasting night and day and should serve to sober our view of the probable future of news on the American air. We heard Europe's crisis. Well, perhaps Europe will hear ours when it comes, whereas we in all probability shall not. If the crisis is planetary in scale, the only sound we shall probably hear will be static or its moral and intellectual equivalent.

Mussolini's American Agents

BY M. B. SCHNAPPER

BACK in 1929 the Fascist League of North America enjoyed lush days. It had 129 fascios, or branches, scattered through the country, and each of its 12,000 full-fledged members paid dues of $13 a year. Articulate and influential far beyond its size, it held sway over four million Italian-Americans by means of incessant propaganda and intermittent violence. By the end of 1929, however, its activities were checked by a mounting indignation at its aggressive methods. In opposition to it the American Friends of Italian Freedom was formed under the sponsorship of Oswald Garrison Villard, Stephen S. Wise, and other distinguished defenders of democratic rights. Senator Borah, alarmed by the League's growing influence, turned a glaring light upon it. Senator Tom Heflin dropped his pomposity for a moment and offered a resolution to investigate it. An article by Marcus Duffield in *Harper's* exposed its ramifications in damning detail. Overnight the Fascist League seemed to have aroused the hostility of the American people, and in consequence the organization was hastily —almost frantically—disbanded.

To all appearances there has been no Italian Fascist movement of consequence in the United States since that time. Yet probably more Italian-Americans are today favorably inclined toward Italian fascism and Mussolini than when the Fascist League was in existence. Walk through any Italian community in this country and you will see Mussolini's picture everywhere—in the clubroom, in the church, in the grocery; you will hear that fascism has made Italy a great and powerful nation; you will learn that most Italian-Americans of local or national importance are—indeed, have to be—pro-Fascist. What has nourished the growth of these sentiments? Ever since the dissolution of the Fascist League, Mus-

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solini's American lieutenants have been operating with more zeal, and with a good deal more shrewdness, than is generally realized. Recognizing American antipathy toward colored shirts and foreign symbols, they have discarded both. With great care and thoroughness they have blended fascism into the Italian-American scene so skilfully that crude or objectionable evidences of it are hardly discernible. In place of the Fascist League they have organized a network of societies which seem to have little in common with their predecessor and yet work perhaps far more effectively toward the same ends.

An ominous warning to America is contained in the charges recently placed before the House Committee Investigating Un-American Activities by Girolamo Valenti, chairman of the Italian Anti-Fascist Committee. We can ill afford to ignore evidence that the O. V. R. A., a branch of the Italian government's secret service, operates in the United States; that Italian consular officials enjoying diplomatic immunity are laying the foundations of a Fascist movement in this country; that Fascist propaganda is being broadcast through some 200 Italian-American organizations; that Black Shirt units employing strong-arm tactics are located in the major cities of the country; that Fascist propaganda is being insinuated into public and parochial schools.

In the very year that the Fascist League was disbanded there came quietly into existence the Lictor Federation. It began where the Fascist League left off, drawing into itself the latter's fascios, or branches, almost all of which had simply become clubs in order to escape criticism. Few changes in personnel or policy were necessary, but the more blatant procedures were toned down. The wearing of uniforms was restricted to special occasions and limited areas. (Today, as Italian fascism becomes more arrogant, the black-shirt costume is increasingly in evidence at Lictor Federation meetings.) At the Lictor Federation's eighth congress last year Secretary General Joseph Santy concluded a report of the organization's activities with a proclamation of "fealty toward the Fatherland in all our efforts." There followed "interminable applause for the King-Emperor and the Duce," according to a glowing first-page story in *Il Progresso*, a New York Italian-language newspaper not unfriendly to the Fascist cause.

All the Italian clubs and societies which constitute the Lictor Federation are openly sympathetic with fascism. Invariably their quarters are decorated with Fascist symbols and pictures of Mussolini. The Mario Morgantini Club is typical: its walls are literally covered with Fascist decorations; its members give each other the Fascist salute; no one may enter without saluting the vigilant entrance guard. Organized a few years ago by Pietro Carbonelli, the organization is nominally governed by a triumvirate, with Triumvir Ronzi Abbondanala in the ascendant at the moment. It has approximately 1,000 members. Every Fascist event of importance—the founding of Rome, the anniversary of fascism, and the like—is observed as patriotically by the members of the club as by the faithful in Italy. In line with Mussolini's present affection for Hitler, the club cooperates closely with the Nazi German-American Bund.

The organ of the Lictor Federation and its affiliates, *La Scure* (the Hatchet), is supplemented by *Il Grido della Stirpe* (the Cry of the Race), an avowed "organ of Fascist propaganda." The contents of this publication are what one might expect: distorted news, editorial vituperation, headline hysteria. The United States is treated with about as much restraint as it is in *Il Popolo*, Mussolini's personal organ. President Roosevelt is slandered in the same paragraph with Stalin, democracy in the same breath with anarchy. On the fifteenth anniversary of Italian fascism last October a special issue contained messages from Achille Starace, general secretary of the Fascist Party of Italy, Fulvio Suvich, Italian ambassador to Washington, Giuseppe Bastianini, Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Felice Felicioni, international president of the Dante Alighieri Society, and a score of lesser Fascist notables.

The Italian Historical Society, organized shortly after the liquidation of the Fascist League, took over most of the publication functions of that organization. Unlike the league, however, it has directed its propaganda not only at Italian-Americans but at the public at large. For protective coloration it has frequently enlisted the aid of Americans sympathetic with Italian fascism. Among the authors of its pamphlets is Harold Lord Varney, formerly editor of the Fascist *Awakener*. Its most popular English publications are "The Italo-Ethiopian Controversy," "Handbook for American Students in Italy," "Nationalism in Italian Education," "The Child in Italy Today." The scholarly pretensions of the society are seldom challenged; only when scrutinized carefully has it been recognized for what it is. Shortly after it received a permit to use a Paterson, New Jersey, school for a meeting, local citizens became curious about its activities, launched an informal investigation, and on the basis of carefully sifted facts protested to the Board of Education that the organization had no right to the use of public buildings. The Mayor of Paterson revoked the permit, and the meeting was never held. The chairman of the society's board of trustees, Giuseppe Previtale, was second only to Count di Revel in the Fascist League.

It is natural that the Italian Historical Society should share its office with the American Italian Union, an organization with which it has much in common. The union was founded in 1935 by Ugo V. D'Annunzio, the son of the poet, to counteract the ill-feeling aroused in America by the rape of Ethiopia. With this object it has published "Roman Peace and Civil Progress in Redeemed

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Ethiopia," "The Youth Movement in Italy," "Italy Incorporated," and other pamphlets.

The Italy America Society serves up its propaganda chiefly in cultural guises. Avowedly it is an "association of Americans and Italians who, appreciating the need of awakening Americans to the actual conditions and achievements of modern Italy, desire to create and sustain a broader and more intelligent understanding of Italy and the advantages that will result from a sound and stable relationship between the two nations." Actually it is an organization of Italian-Americans and Americans interested in Italy financially or otherwise. The active officers are for the most part Italian-American pro-Fascists, the inactive such prominent Americans as Chester Aldrich, Myron C. Taylor, Thomas W. Lamont, William Guggenheim, Paul D. Cravath, and Marshall Field. Although it has ostensibly a cultural purpose, artists and writers are conspicuously absent from its rolls. And although it claims to be purely an "American organization," it maintains offices in Rome and branches in twenty other Italian cities and lists Italian noblewomen as its Italian officers.

The Dante Alighieri Society was in existence before the advent of fascism, but was an inconsequential organization in this country until recent years. Today it is an important propaganda arm of the Italian consulates in the United States. In New York, for example, the consulate and the society occupy the same offices, and Mario Giani, cultural attaché of the consulate, is president of the local branch. That the true aim of the Dante Society is the furtherance of the Fascist cause is indicated by the fact that its international president, Felice Felicioni, is a high Fascist official, by the Fascist character of most of its activities, and by its sponsorship of schools more concerned with the inculcation of fascism than with the Italian language.

Last summer, according to *Il Progresso,* the presentation of Dante Society awards to young people excelling in affiliated schools was marked by the Fascist salute, the Fascist anthem, and Fascist speeches. In opening the meeting, which was attended by several thousand children and parents, Count Vacchetti, a Fascist propagandist, said, "Let us stand in the name of our Italy and salute our King-Emperor and our Duce." Mario Giani revealed in his speech that he sent reports of Italian schools in the United States to Pieri Parini, international head of the Bureau of Fascism Abroad. A few weeks later the Dante Society and Italian consulate officials arranged for eighty youngsters to visit Italy under the auspices of the Fascist government.

Three other groups—the Sons of Italy in America, the Independent Order of the Sons of Italy, and the Grand Lodge of the Sons of Italy—despite petty differences are as one in their sympathy for fascism and Mussolini. The Sons of Italy in America, the largest Italian fraternal order in the country, has branches in seventeen states and a reported national membership of 350,000. Trips to Fascist Italy are frequently arranged by it.

The object of the Young Italian-American Federation, as stated prominently on its stationery, is an "Italo-American youth front." In its efforts to achieve this it has found it necessary, among other things, to launch a vigorous boycott campaign against the New York *World-Telegram, Post,* and *Daily News* as "anti-Italian, anti-American, and communistic." To prove its charges of communism the federation declared that neither the *Post* nor the *World-Telegram* had ever "lost an opportunity, in column, or editorial, or cartoon, to disparage and denigrate Italy and its leaders." The editorial page of the *World-Telegram,* it declared, "fairly bristles with 'leftists' who, while not so outspoken as the *Post* writers, have nevertheless been deliberately offensive in their references to the Italian people." Heywood Broun, Westbrook Pegler, Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, and Harry Elmer Barnes were all denounced as Moscow agents. Among the officers of the federation are some twenty New York Democratic politicians; at the time of the boycott campaign six were aldermen, six assemblymen, and one a Tammany representative.

As revealed by *The Nation* in 1934 and 1935, the Casa Italiana at Columbia University is the center of Fascist cultural activities in the United States. It is enough to note here that Professor Giuseppe Prezzolini, a scholarly spokesman of fascism, is its director; that it acts as host to visiting Italian Fascists, sponsors frequent lectures on Fascist topics, and receives funds from the New York consul general; that its officers are in regular correspondence with Fascist organizations within and outside the country; that Mussolini discussed its establishment with Peter M. Riccio, secretary general of the Institute of Italian Culture, and Professor Prezzolini; that Mussolini himself supplied much of its expensive furnishings; that anti-Fascists such as Gaetano Salvemini and Guglielmo Ferrero have been barred from speaking at its headquarters; that a newly appointed Italian consul general was greeted in its auditorium with the Fascist salute and the Fascist anthem; that on June 17, 1935, *Il Popolo* tersely announced that "Il Duce has received Giuseppe Prezzolini, who reported to him on the activities of the Casa Italiana of Columbia University."

The influence of Italian fascism is felt in some degree in every phase of Italian-American life. Even the Italian sport clubs show a Fascist tinge. And even the radio has been enlisted as a medium of Fascist propaganda. Italian broadcasts over WBNX, WOV, WHOM, and WFAB feature talks on the virtues of fascism and Mussolini and end with the singing of "Giovinezza," the official Fascist anthem. These broadcasts have as sponsors not only various pro-Fascist organizations but also merchants doing business with Fascist Italy.

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United States vs. Alcoa

BY JAMES WECHSLER

II

FOR the Aluminum Company of America the first decade of this century was an era of economic penetration; the second was one of emerging industrial empire. By the 1920's the setting was auspicious for consolidation of the gains so fiercely won. Senator Walsh's angry protests were a still, small voice beside the whispered influence of Andrew Mellon; trust-busting was an archaic slogan with few contemporary advocates. In a tangibly hostile environment George D. Haskell conceived the altogether visionary scheme of competing with Alcoa in the production of aluminum. He failed, but only after a stubborn and dramatic struggle; and the circumstances of his failure are an incomparable illustration of the aluminum trust's power.

Haskell, who was president of the Bausch Machine Tool Corporation, decided to undertake the production of duralumin—an alloy composed 95 per cent of aluminum. News of his intention traveled swiftly to Arthur V. Davis, president of Alcoa, who, after he had recovered from his astonishment, expressed the conventional reaction: Buy him out. Davis tried in person to persuade Haskell to sell. He assured him that he would be "taken care of"; he urged him to behave like other boys. Defiantly rejecting these advances, Haskell sought to buy 20,000 pounds of aluminum with which to experiment in duralumin production, announcing that if his bid was turned down he would negotiate at once with foreign producers. "You might as well buy from me," Davis observed, "because we have an agreement so that we all sell at about the same price."

The negotiations ended in a deadlock, and soon afterward both Alcoa and Haskell obtained licenses to carry on duralumin experiments. By 1925 the venture was progressing favorably; Haskell was selling 30 per cent of the duralumin consumed here, and Alcoa was furnishing the rest. With his concern operating profitably, Haskell's optimism grew and his ambitions expanded. His confidence was increased when he learned that General Motors was contemplating the use of duralumin; if he could obtain that order Haskell knew that his position would be impregnable. But to effect the deal he needed Alcoa's aluminum. Again he went to Alcoa seeking a large shipment, and a price concession because of the volume of the purchase.

His request was refused. Throughout the interview Davis evaded the issue, tried to ascertain the name of Haskell's prospective customer, badgered him for details of the transaction. Finally, when Haskell continued to emphasize the size of his order, Davis blandly outlined Alcoa's basic philosophy. He informed Haskell that Alcoa was not interested in a large order at a low price; it preferred to restrict production and maintain the price at its current level.

With Alcoa plainly determined to sabotage his plans, Haskell was caught in an impasse from which there appeared only one way out: to discover an independent source of bauxite which he could draw on for his duralumin. He knew there was no longer an accessible supply in the United States, but the world's resources beckoned. Thus was started a frenzied, spectacular race around the world. Haskell set the pace; Alcoa pursued him. Each time that Haskell was about to close a deal, Alcoa snatched the prize.

Norway, which still produces the major portion of the foreign aluminum imported into the United States, was Haskell's first stop. While he surveyed the scene, Alcoa acted. First it launched negotiations which culminated in the purchase of a half-interest in the Norsk Company, one of Norway's two major aluminum plants. Then, in collaboration with French and British interests, Alcoa bought a one-third share in Det Norske Nitrid, the other important Norwegian plant. These moves not only forestalled Haskell's bid but gave Alcoa a foothold in the European market. And Attorney General Daugherty announced that the 1912 consent degree would not interfere with the transactions.

Shifting his attention to Canada, Haskell wrote to the Shawinigan Company in an effort to obtain water power, since the available American power which Alcoa didn't own was too costly for Haskell's enterprise. But Shawinigan was a faithful servant of Alcoa. Its officers told Haskell that they were unwilling to "tie up" the large block of stock he tried to buy, although they had never refused to do so for Alcoa.

At that moment James B. Duke, the tobacco millionaire, abruptly informed Haskell that he was interested in his project. This was momentous news, since Duke himself owned a huge power development in Canada which could be harnessed for the production of aluminum. Later Duke assured Haskell that he would sympathetically consider a partnership with him in the aluminum industry, on one condition—that adequate bauxite deposits be found.

So Haskell resumed his explorations. In May, 1924, he opened negotiations with a Viennese company one

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of whose subsidiaries owned large bauxite areas. Before an agreement could be sealed, Alcoa appeared and quietly bought the subsidiary. The race shifted to bauxite deposits in Dutch Guiana. Once more Haskell took steps to purchase the property; he was brushed unceremoniously aside by one of Alcoa's subsidiaries. An American company owned bauxite deposits in British Guiana. When Haskell tried to buy them, Alcoa formed a syndicate and bought the whole company.

In his search Haskell had traveled to remote regions. While he was away, the final act of his quest and failure was staged. In June, 1925, with Andrew Mellon figuring prominently in the transaction, Alcoa purchased the power sites of James B. Duke. The terms were conspicuously generous: Duke was given one-ninth of Alcoa's stock, worth at least $25,000,000, for his still undeveloped water site, which an Alcoa official has described as "a bunch of huckleberry bushes with water running through." Haskell was left bewildered and disconsolate somewhere in the Guianas.

Today he is drawing $20,000 a year as "adviser" to Alcoa.

The war against Haskell carried Alcoa's emissaries around the world, but not for the first time. In fastening its grip on the American market, Alcoa had been compelled to maintain a constant defense against the threat of foreign penetration. To this end two policies have been alternately pursued: one based on signed or "gentleman's" agreements with foreign interests, the other on the seizure of strategic sites in Europe to be used as a first-line trench when agreements broke down. The combination has been magnificently effective; today less than 6 per cent of the aluminum sold in America comes from abroad. While this amount tends to blur the rugged outlines of Alcoa's monopoly, it is certainly not of competitive dimensions.

Before the World War agreements with foreign companies were most characteristic of Alcoa's policy; in the post-war years such alliances were sought less often. There was, however, no important resurgence of foreign rivalry in the American market, for Alcoa's representatives continued to be active in foreign zones, capturing valuable sites and threatening to unload huge quantities of aluminum on the European market if Europeans tried to invade the United States. In 1927, weary of the burden of maintaining this armed threat to foreign enemies, Alcoa was ready to return to the pacts which made such armaments unnecessary. That purpose was behind the formation of Aluminium Ltd. in Canada. In deference to this nation's anti-trust laws, Aluminium Ltd. was officially heralded as an independent agency presumably ready to fight Alcoa's monopoly on this continent. All this, of course, was stage play. In actuality the stockholders of Alcoa and Aluminium Ltd. were identical; Andrew and Richard Mellon, together with Arthur V. Davis, owned 51 per cent. Edward K. Davis—Arthur's brother—was named president of the Canadian Company; Roy Hunt was made president of Alcoa, replacing Arthur V. Davis, who became chairman, a post created for the occasion.

Aluminium Ltd. has never competed with Alcoa, although its equipment for such a contest is admirable. It ships its product halfway around the world to Japan rather than intrude upon Alcoa's private domain. Its value to Alcoa, however, does not lie in this self-effacement but in its services as Alcoa's spokesman in the signing of international agreements which Alcoa itself, because of anti-trust restrictions, dare not sign. To celebrate America's Independence Day in 1931, an international cartel of unsurpassed scope came into existence with the avowed blessings of Aluminium Ltd. and the concealed approval of Alcoa. While Alcoa was only a silent partner to that accord, its rules for the future conduct of the aluminum industry on a world scale would have been meaningless without Alcoa's consent. Aluminium Ltd.'s participation gave that consent.

Alcoa's lawyers are prosperous, glib, truculent; most of them dedicated to the struggle for corporate immunity, they acknowledge the present trial as a turning-point in that war. To separate their sublime rhetoric from ridiculous sophistry, to break down detailed controversy over time, place, and intent, is essentially the problem of the courtroom; the pattern of economic ascendancy can scarcely be challenged. Some of Alcoa's most imaginative thrusts are worth recording. In explaining the formation of Aluminium Ltd. it hotly repudiates any dream of monopoly. The real story is much simpler, embroidered only by grateful sentimentality. The starting-point, we are told, was the fact that both Roy A. Hunt and Edward K. Davis, having devoted their lives to the aluminum industry, deserved their varsity letters in the form of some title of great magnitude. Since it was impossible to designate both of them president of Alcoa, the only earthly reward commensurate with their deeds, an equally impressive title was needed. So Aluminium Ltd. was set up—an independent, virile, competitive Canadian corporation. Edward become president of Ltd., Roy of Alcoa, each the master of his own industrial fairyland.

Alcoa offers an equally rhapsodic rebuttal to the government's accusation of unlawful foreign agreements. Its chieftains concede that emissaries of Europe's leading aluminum firms came to the United States in 1931 when the latest accord was allegedly being drafted. They were, it is acknowledged, greeted warmly by the American manufacturers—Americans and foreigners traveled together to inspect Alcoa's plants and dined and lived together for several weeks in an atmosphere of great conviviality. But during this entire time, Alcoa now

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insists, no conversations of a business nature took place. In similar vein is Alcoa's emphasis upon the recurrence of sheer coincidence. Deals are made, plants are bought out when rivals threaten to buy first, Duke sells out at the moment that Haskell is placing reliance upon him—all these are recorded as pure coincidence, not symptoms of the drive for monopoly.

The details of the legal defense must be considered in the broader social framework within which Alcoa's attorneys operate. In its major outlines the case they submit echoes the traditional plea of American big business resisting social regulation. The issue is shifted from the plane of economic imperatives to the misty level of economic morality; from the proprietary instinct emerges a charter of sacred rights which the New Deal is allegedly violating. The government is accused of despising "bigness" and penalizing "initiative," of persecuting "success" and glorifying "incompetence."

The prosecution contends that these outcries merely distract attention from the crucial economic consequences of Alcoa's power. Today the aluminum trust deliberately sustains prices rather than extend the use of aluminum to pioneering industries. Today Alcoa is stifling the final faint vibrations of competitive vitality in this economic sphere. When its attorneys insist that competition is provided by other commodities, such as copper and steel, they are denying the existence of monopoly in almost any area.

In finally establishing, however, that aluminum is a gigantic manifestation of monopoly, we do not automatically discover the steps which must be taken to deal with such growths. The problems which emerge from the aluminum trial are a miniature of the dilemma presented by our whole economic structure in its advancing years. Facing us are vast tasks of social engineering which the monopoly inquiry was presumably initiated to meet. If the court sustains the government's contention, various formulas of reorganization must be explored by the industry. These range from the prosecution's plea for separation of the trust's units to schemes for federal regulation of the present structure. Upon one axiom there must nevertheless be general agreement, except in the higher regions of Wall Street: Alcoa's monopoly is incompatible with the social imperatives of our time. It is a state within a state, writing its own laws, obeying only its own conscience. The current trial may disclose whether the courts, under existing laws, can identify the abuses which monopoly has engendered. The ultimate question is how far it is possible, within the boundaries of the profit system, to check the trend toward industrial dictatorship. In hastening the decline of the aluminum empire, the government may in some measure illuminate these greater issues.

[*This is the concluding section of Mr. Wechsler's article. Part I appeared in last week's issue.*]

Pocket Guide

BY HELEN WOODWARD

THE PURE IN SILK

I'D LIKE to begin this series by saying that you, the customer, are always right. But at the moment you, in the role of consumer, are trying to make the Federal Trade Commission do something about silk which will take money out of your own pocket.

The consumer is now trying to divide all silk into pure and impure, and in the innocence of her heart she is winding herself into a snarled cocoon. She thinks she's fighting for better silk, but she's really fighting for the Japanese silk industry.

This grew out of the fight on rayon. Three or four years ago hundreds of thousands of women rolled up their sleeves in a crusade. They were sick and tired of buying fancy names that merely looked like silk. Advertisers offered "*vitalized* Tropicana," "Ciré Satin," "Laughing Leaves," "Angel's Breath." Some were put out by good firms. But what were they really made of? Who could tell?

So when speakers came around to the club and said, "Let's get together and stop this," it sounded good. Letters went out far and wide signed by Consumer This and Consumer That. Articles appeared in magazines that carried no fashion advertising. All showed that the women were being cheated—as they were.

The crusade won. The industry and the Federal Trade Commission got together. They made rules that rayon should be marked rayon and silk silk. The rules are working all right. Some concerns are trying to slip from under, but the Federal Trade Commission gets after them.

All that is fine. But surely the women should have known while they were about it that this campaign was primarily to the advantage of Japan. This is how it worked. The rayon-silk industry is organized into two groups, the National Federation of Textiles, supposed to be the rayon group, and the International Silk Guild, which is the silk group. There is some confusion because a good many of the biggest houses manufacture both rayon and silk. The silk group, the International Silk Guild, gets its funds from its members and also from a tax collected at the port of export in Japan. Over the telephone the guild said that it was naturally much benefited by these new rules, but that it didn't take any special part in the campaign. This is contrary to the general impression in the trade.

The Japanese naturally wanted to increase the export and sale of their silk. But they didn't send around their own speakers or sign the articles and circulars with their names. So far as the average woman knew, the campaign sprang entirely from the initiative of consumers. It was a good campaign, but, oddly, it backfired. It didn't boost the sale of silk. Instead, it boosted the sale of rayon. And here's why.

Rayon first appeared on the market in 1911. It was ugly and sleazy. It improved slowly, but not enough. Then along came the campaign I've just told you about. That scared the rayon people. They got busy. They improved their product, wove better patterns, designed lovely clothes. And on top of

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that they did an immense amount of advertising. Moreover, they called the product by honest names. In return for the ads, the fashion magazines pushed rayon editorially. The sales rose, and the rise in the sale of rayon meant a drop in the sale of silk because women couldn't buy more than a certain amount of fabrics.

Today rayon is often as beautiful as silk, and it's usually cheaper. Though pure silk is the strongest of fibers, good rayon wears well. Rayon taffeta doesn't crack, as does silk taffeta.

The rayons have three bad marks against them. One group, the acetates, has to be ironed with a cool iron. A hot iron melts the fabric. Rayon, warmer than silk, is uncomfortable in summer. Rayon stockings have not yet shaped themselves closely to the foot, though du Pont claims that it has a new rayon which will correct that.

But now the silk-yarn people have jumped into a new phase of the fight, and the women have jumped in with them —jumped in, I fear, over their heads. This new fight has nothing to do with rayon. Here's the story.

Silk cannot be all pure silk. It has to contain a certain admixture for dyeing and finishing. And a few silks must contain lead salts for weighting. In the mind of the consumer, the addition in both cases sounds like adulteration—and sometimes it is. In many silks weighting is swindling, but some silks—like taffeta, which needs body and stiffness—have to be weighted. Lapels on men's evening clothes must be weighted 400 per cent.

The new consumer movement demands that silk should be marked with the exact percentage of weighting. As you can see from the fact that lapel silk is weighted 400 per cent, such markings would have no real meaning to the buyer. Why are women's groups backing such provisions? Goodness knows. But it's clear enough why the International Silk Guild is enthusiastic over the proposed rules.

The big thing in silk is hosiery. Eighty per cent of all silk imported goes into stockings. There weighting is not necessary, and there, indeed, it is very bad. Obviously, the less weighting the more actual silk will be imported.

Now take the dyeing and finishing content. The Federal Trade Commission has laid down a rule that the dyeing and finishing content of silk must not be more than 10 per cent, and—here's the little devil in this story—it must be as much less than 10 per cent as possible. But how can that percentage marking mean anything to a woman buying a few yards of silk at a counter? Only an expert can tell whether a piece of silk needs 10 or 6 per cent.

It is a good thing to have your silk or rayon clearly marked. It would be sensible perhaps to mark the silk by government grades, with all those below standard rejected. Or they might be marked slightly, medium, or heavily weighted. But the present plan on which the women are working is merely confusing.

The point of all this is: while it is fine for women's clubs to fight for the consumer, they really ought to know what they're doing and why. It might not be a bad idea to get in touch with experts. A few of their members might even find it exciting to take a hard course of study and themselves become experts. Then the club could look all around and through the subject instead of just in its face.

In the Wind

INSURGENT AUTHORITIES at Bilbao, according to trustworthy sources, recently made elaborate preparations to unveil a statue of the late General Mola, killed in an airplane accident. On the day of the unveiling, only officials—including Germans and Italians—were allowed near the platform. A Falangist leader stepped forward and with a florid gesture drew aside the covering; the statue of General Mola appeared—minus its head. A furious search for the perpetrators of the deed brought no results.

UNFAIR TREATMENT of the NLRB by important newspapers has been frequently noted in Washington. Hence this comment now circulating, particularly among newspapermen, in the capital: "The NLRB has a batting average of .500; it wins all its cases in court and loses them all in the newspapers."

AT THE HEIGHT of the European crisis this announcement came over Chicago's station WGN (operated by the Chicago *Tribune*): "Miss Sigrid Schultz, Chicago *Tribune* correspondent in Central Europe, will speak this afternoon from Munich. Her discussion of the four-power conference and the possibility of war will be heard at 4:55 or 5 p.m., or whenever the Cub-Pirate game is over."

LIFE MAGAZINE recently ran a picture of the Ku Klux Klan's latest "ride" in Lakeland, Florida; accompanying the picture was a caption derogatory to the Klan. It evoked this comment from the Tampa *Tribune*: "About time to light a cross on East Twenty-second Street, Chicago, where *Life* is published."

A VISITOR to New York's luxurious Junior League clubhouse was startled by the bleak, crowded tenements which adjoin it. "You really ought to do something about those people," observed the visitor, pointing to the poverty-stricken women and undernourished babies. "Yes," came the hostess's innocent reply, "for four years now we've discussed putting up screens—or perhaps a hedge."

CATALOGUE NO. 297 of the Union Library Association carries this advertisement: "'Lady Chatterley's Lover,' by D. H. Lawrence. Unexpurgated, except for the obscene passages."

IN HIS famous final Nürnberg address Hitler referred to an earlier speech which he said he had delivered to the Reichstag on February 22. Actually his Reichstag address was delivered on February 20. He may have been reluctant to mention that date because in many German block calendars February 20 bears the inscription: *Um des Friedens willen lerne schweigen* (For the sake of peace learn to be silent).

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

I NEVER dreamed that I could feel so badly about a bad peace as I do about the settlement of Munich. But now it has come back to me that like all other pacifists I have repeatedly said that those who believe that war must be avoided at all costs must be prepared to suffer grievous injustice and wrong, and the same is true of nations. That has now come to pass: most grievous wrongs have been inflicted upon Czechoslovakia in order to preserve peace, and there is no remedy possible—at least not for a long, long while to come and perhaps never. The Czechs have obeyed the Biblical injunction, "Resist not evil," and they are paying the price.

They are not the only ones who will pay. Those who have inflicted these wrongs upon Czechoslovakia are also going to pay an enormous price, how great no man today can possibly measure. Take the French. They who have been so bitterly critical of Hitler because after telling Austria that he would forever respect its independence he nevertheless broke his word, have now violated their part in the agreement with other nations to guarantee the independence of Czechoslovakia, and, as the *Journal of Moscow* has well remarked, thereby invalidated their offensive and defensive alliance with Russia. France stands alone today unless it can count upon the support of England, and if the Chamberlain policy continues to control in England it is not impossible that the inner group of big-business conservatives, who in the last analysis pull the strings, will put England into a hard and fast alliance with Germany and drop France.

Who will deny today that British policy is now definitely anti-Soviet? Thanks to Chamberlain, Hitler achieved vastly more than the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. He has gained a springboard for future attacks upon Rumania and Yugoslavia. He has destroyed not only the alliance between Czechoslovakia and Russia, but what is vastly more important, that between France and Moscow, which he desired to do above all else. The latter seems to me the most dangerous of his achievements from the Allied point of view. Without the Russian alliance I do not believe that England and France can stand up to Hitler; probably the enlarged Reich will soon be in a position to fight France and England single-handed with every possibility of defeating them.

Is not France a vassal nation today, more than ever a vassal of England, if not of Hitler? What incentive is there, then, for Rumania to continue its alliance with France, or for Poland to put any faith in French promises? Only twenty-four years ago the whole world was outraged because Germany tore up its treaty with Belgium and invaded that country. Now France has put itself morally in exactly the same position, even though its troops have not invaded Czechoslovakia. In England, too, the defenders of Chamberlain are turning upon his critics and saying, "There was nothing else for us to do unless we wished to go to war in behalf of a small country with which we are really not concerned." Yes, but that is precisely what England did do in 1914. It told the world that it fought Germany then primarily to save Belgium. Then it shifted its ground and discovered that it was really fighting to prevent Germany's becoming the dominating power in Europe—dominating by force, by sheer naked brutality and stark military power. And that, too, is precisely what has come to pass. Hitler dominates Europe by the abject fear of his airplanes on the part of France and England.

I am not of those who say that there are worse things than war. I merely share the opinion of any number of observers that Hitler could have been stopped and both Austria and Czechoslovakia saved without the firing of a gun if only the French and English leadership had been vigorous and determined from the very beginning of the Hitler regime. Undoubtedly peace-lovers, pacifists if you please, are in the hardest position in which they have ever been put. Their case rests largely upon their belief that the rise of Hitler could have been blocked several years ago by a united front, threatening not war but economic pressure, non-intercourse. Now the men who believed in force and military power are the ones who have knuckled under, and as a result of their policies have installed Hitler as the dictator of Europe.

As for Russia, there is nothing left for it to do but to fortify, fortify, fortify, diverting more and more of its man power and national wealth to preparing for war. They are realists in Moscow, which is something that cannot be said of Daladier or Chamberlain, and if the Russian generals know their business they are today recasting their plans in the light of the fact that the line-up against them in the West is now Germany plus England plus Poland and probably the buffer states on the western Russian boundary, with Japan on the other flank ready to sail in at the first opportunity. Peace in Europe? Chaos, that's what it is, absolute moral chaos, with not a single nation except perhaps Russia paying the slightest attention to the sanctity of treaties.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Life and Times of Franklin

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. By Carl Van Doren. The Viking Press. $3.75.

A REVIEW of Mr. Van Doren's "Benjamin Franklin" can be nothing short of a eulogy. The greatest American has found a biographer worthy of him. Franklin's universal activity; his multifarious interests—scientific, political, personal; his relations with contemporaries; his share in events which shaped the destiny of mankind; and not least his constant observation of his own life and the world about him which resulted in the great number of his writings, sometimes thrown off for ephemeral publication in journals and pamphlets, often written for himself alone or in personal correspondence—all this puts upon the biographer a labor of Hercules. "This is a long book," the sentence with which Mr. Van Doren begins his preface, is followed by a complete justification of its length in the list of sources examined and of references to materials hitherto unknown or unused. The amount of these last is astonishing, as are Mr. Van Doren's acumen in discovering and industry in collecting them. The generous recognition which he gives to the assistance of some forty institutions and individuals is a reminder that a modern historical biography is essentially a cooperative enterprise of which the author is the engineer, selecting and organizing material and employing helpers in carrying out his design.

Such is evidently the conception which Mr. Van Doren has of his function. He does not undertake as artist or psychologist to provide an interpretation of Franklin. He lets the facts speak for themselves. Yet from these facts emerges a personality of extraordinary attraction, embodying those characteristics which we like to think of as peculiarly American. There is Franklin's practical competence shown in handling his own business and that of his city, his province, and his nascent nation. There is his ceaseless curiosity in inquiring into nature, his energy and skill in pursuing these inquiries, and his power of brain and hand which resulted in useful inventions ranging from the Franklin stove to bifocal spectacles. There is what Matthew Arnold called his "victorious common sense" in dealing with human affairs in a spirit of conciliation and compromise. When British pride was affronted by the silly affair known as the Boston Tea Party he offered to pay for the tea out of his own pocket. There is his tolerance extending even to the Indians; his affection for his family and friends; his indulgence of human frailty with no conviction of sin. There is his sense of humor, appearing sometimes in satire not unworthy of Swift, as in "The Speech of Polly Baker," throwing her five bastards by the law of nature in the face of New England Puritanism; sometimes in anecdotes with the force of fables to bring intellectual disputes to the test of homely wisdom; and again in an abundant sense of play ranging from crude practical jokes in primitive Pennsylvania to the refined gaieties of speech and manners in the Paris of Louis Seize. There is finally his capacity for large conceptions, which in politics ranged from the first plan of cooperation among the colonies to the design of imperial unity of the English race, and which included ambitious projects of personal perfection and an international "United Party for Virtue." In this comprehensive character Franklin reminds us in turn of one and another of the great Americans. It is true he showed none of the severe integrity of Washington; but he had the philosophic faith of Jefferson, the inventive genius of Edison, the mingling of realism and idealism of Emerson and of Lincoln, the humanism of Channing and of Whitman, the humor of Mark Twain.

Among the fine qualities which Mr. Van Doren exhibits as a biographer is his evocation of the background against which we see the sturdy figure of Franklin. The atmosphere of Puritan Boston is clearly differentiated from that of Quaker Philadelphia. The small-city manner and matter of London is far from the cosmopolitan spirit of Paris in the same decade. Franklin was equally at home in both the latter capitals, and his personal relations included the historic figures of both. The story of his long residence in London as agent of the colonies involves an account of the complicated political history preceding the Revolutionary War, and the mutations of English party control. The story of his career as commissioner in France involves an account of the various aspects of European interest, economic and political, in the Revolution, and of the Continental coalition against the British Empire. In these affairs, as Mr. Van Doren remarks, Franklin combined the departments of state, treasury, and navy of the young republic. The biography becomes a "Life and Times of Franklin." But Mr. Van Doren does not fall under Lowell's criticism of Masson, who allows Milton to pop up only casually in his own biography. Everything in the background is centered on Franklin. Two episodes in particular are handled with dramatic skill: one when Franklin as agent for the colonies stood in contemptuous silence before the Privy Council in London, while Alexander Wedderburn, the "sarcastic Sawney" of the English bar, loaded him with objurgation designed to break him and his cause; another when Franklin met Voltaire in public and responded to the popular cry: *Il faut s'embrasser à la Française.*

Mr. Van Doren more than any previous biographer of Franklin has had access to his letters to women, to those young girls who afterward grew up to become Catherine Greene and Polly Hewson, in whose families he passed from the relation of father to grandfather; to the ladies of Paris, Madame Helvetius and Madame Brillon, with whom he exchanged "philosophic ribaldries" and elegant philanderings. Franklin's philosophy was an outdoor muse. She served him well in his conduct of life and in a multitude of human relations, in which appear his humor and tenderness, his light touch upon life and his joy in it. If Franklin was an embodiment of the most notable qualities of his great fellow-countrymen, in one respect he surpassed them—in the richness and abundance of those gifts which are essentially hu-

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mane. It was this humanism, translated into the larger social sphere as urbanity, which consolidated Franklin's place in history as a citizen of the world. Certain figures tend to become regarded as summing up the spirit of an age—Petrarch in the fourteenth century, Leonardo in the fifteenth, Erasmus in the sixteenth, Milton in the seventeenth. Franklin joins this august company as the gonfalonier of the eighteenth century. He is the sign of the real revolution of that age in the supremacy of the middle class; but in his progress from runaway apprentice of a provincial town to eminence in the civilized world he left behind the philistinism that marks so much that is harsh and unlovely in that class, and revealed in many ways its possibilities of contributing to a higher manhood and a better world. ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

Scandinavia Revisited

THIS IS DEMOCRACY. By Marquis W. Childs. Yale University Press. $2.50.

THE realistic Swedes, when asked for an opinion on Marquis Childs's earlier work "Sweden: The Middle Way," are apt to raise their eyebrows. We appreciate the author's kind words, they say in effect, but we feel his enthusiasm has led him into painting too rosy a picture. The truth is that any sensitive American is apt to be rather dazzled by his first impressions of Sweden. There is such an air of general well-being, so few outward signs of poverty, so few indications of overbearing wealth. The degradation that industrialism has stamped on the face of our cities seems wholly absent. There is a feeling of a society which, by general acceptance of the basic essentials of democracy, has raised social conflict to a more civilized plane than elsewhere.

These first impressions are not wholly unjustified, but they leave room for other considerations which make the whole picture rather more subdued. In his new book Mr. Childs, following further visits to Scandinavia, achieves a clearer vision. This time he deals not merely with Sweden but with Norway and Denmark as well, approaching all three from the labor angle. The result is a study which does not pretend to be either exhaustive or profound but achieves an essential balance. There is no uncritical ballyhoo, no claim that labor relations have reached perfection, no assumption that practices successful in one corner of Europe can be applied *en bloc* to the totally different conditions of this country.

The first three chapters cover much the same ground as the recent report of the President's committee of inquiry into labor relations in Sweden, but also give information on parallel developments in Norway and Denmark. They describe the ways in which workers and employers have organized, the methods evolved for collective bargaining, and the role played by the state. Mr. Childs is careful to point out that all the machinery that exists for adjusting industrial disputes has not produced industrial peace. The Scandinavian unions are militant; the employers, who are no less well organized, decidedly hard-boiled. Negotiations frequently prove unavailing, and actually in the decade from 1927 more man-days per thousand workers were lost through wage disputes in Norway than in any other country. Sweden and Denmark occupied second and third places on the list.

Sober Scandinavian realism recognizes that the interests of employer and employed must frequently clash; it refuses to accept the theory that such clashes must involve "total war." Thus espionage is unthinkable, violence practically unheard of. Employers have abandoned attempts to smash trade unions; in the long run, they have become convinced, it is better to deal with a strong union which is in a position to keep as well as make a bargain.

From the efforts of labor to improve its status by industrial organization Mr. Childs turns to its endeavors to obtain a larger share of the national income by political action. All three countries have for some years had Social Democratic governments. Although none of these enjoy independent majorities, they have made considerable advances on the lines of social reformism. But, the author reports, in Norway and Sweden there is a growing feeling that the limits of achievements on present lines are near. They have to take into account the shrinking tendency of international trade, so important to them, and the moral and economic pressure of growing Nazi power. They have been immensely impressed by the wretched fate of Social Democracy in Germany, which they see as the result of sectarianism and insistence on outworn dogmas. So, rejecting totalitarianism of either right or left, they are groping for new formulas.

Scandinavian labor is now tending toward a much wider conception of its field than it has had hitherto. It is seeking to harmonize the interests of the manual workers with those of the peasants, the small middle classes, and the technicians. The trade unions are paying greater attention to those groups which have lagged behind the general advance. The political wing is looking for ways of achieving a stable but not static economy: it is concerned not merely with securing a higher proportion of the national income for the workers but in positive action to increase that income.

This reviewer would have sacrificed the final chapters of this book, which are no more than good feature articles on various aspects of social advance in Scandinavia, for a much more detailed account of these new trends in labor thought. We must be grateful, however, for the information the author has garnered and for the news he brings us of labor movements which are neither in retreat nor complacent about their successes. KEITH HUTCHISON

Storm Piece

IN HAZARD. By Richard Hughes. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

RICHARD HUGHES'S second novel survives two inevitable comparisons: with his first, "A High Wind in Jamaica," and with Conrad's "Typhoon." He has written here the tale of a single-screw turbine steamer, the Archimedes, passing through an almost fatal seven-day hurricane in the Caribbean, and he has had the style, wit, and dramatic invention to keep its dangerous parallels with the other two stories from becoming either obvious or distracting. The cleanness of his writing, the simplicity of a narrative that opposes strength to madness in both men and elements, his coolly scientific description of the storm, the laconic objectivity of which sets up a subtle ambivalence of mood that

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mirrors the minds of the trained seamen fighting their rising fear and helplessness—these combine to produce the desired effect of "scientific possibility," around which plays a brilliant effect of imagery and poetic suggestion: pictures of birds riding the decks through the tornado, of the play of dolphins, of the silent whirling of the giant screw, of the mate's gnomic lemur, of terrorized Chinese firemen and greasers heaping up "like a pile of half-dead fish on a quay," and the day-long pouring of oil on the waves.

> A thin film only a few molecules in thickness [once it had spread out] it bound millions of tons of water. Huge spires of water would dash at the ship, like maddened cathedrals: then the oil spread over them: they rounded, sank, passed away as harmless as a woman's bosom. Or even if they broke, it was only harmless dead water.

Hughes has exchanged Conrad's dramatic focus and intensity for a method of contrasts and irony. He produces the full cold menace of the storm, but where Conrad presented the drama of an astonished soul braving its first full test of strength, Hughes elaborates his tale with description and meteorological analysis, and serializes the emotional impact of his drama over the contrasting reactions of his crew. Each of these becomes a locus of far-reaching implications, moral, social, and even political, and in the end the voyage of the Archimedes becomes a parable of society itself, its conflicts of character and idealism converging upon the single point of a superhuman test of life. Whatever simplicity Hughes's story at first shows is soon proved deceptive, for by the skill of his humor and suggestion he has made it, without excessive underscoring, an allegory of complex proportions, of a kind not unfamiliar in the literature of the sea.

There are, however, several points at which the weight of these suggestions is not sustained. Unlike "A High Wind," "In Hazard" lacks the continuous center of attention there provided by the children; it undertakes instead the complex problem of setting its divided minds and destinies in counterpoint to one another. At times this produces telling and highly successful effects, particularly in the final retrospects where Buxton the economic man, Dick Watchett the human child, Captain Edwardes the man of iron-clad responsibility, and Ao Ling the political poet, thrown into irons as a Kuomintang agitator just as the storm dies, bring the strands of the tale into a final unity. But in their weaving these strands mix and scatter, and the already difficult business of sustaining a storm piece through 250 pages is strained to the point of fatigue. And when set beside "Typhoon," "In Hazard" shows the disadvantages of rejecting the method of dramatic unity and action in favor of one of ironic analysis and poetic elaboration. Conrad's novel lacked neither of these qualities but they remained implicit, dominated by a force that brought into complete focus the conflicting dramas of Jukes, Rout, and the Chinese pilgrims: the shattering disillusionment of Captain MacWhirr's life-long complacency as a seaman.

> Dirty weather he had known, of course. . . . But he had never been given a glimpse of immeasurable strength and of immoderate wrath, the wrath that passes exhausted but never appeased—the wrath and fury of the passionate sea. He knew it existed, as we know that crime and abominations exist; he had heard of it as a peaceable citizen in a town hears of battles, famines, and floods, and yet knows nothing of what these things mean. . . . Captain MacWhirr had sailed over the surface of the oceans as some men go skimming over the years of existence to sink gently into a placid grave, ignorant of life to the last, without ever having been made to see all it may contain of perfidy, of violence, and of terror. There are on sea and land such men thus fortunate—or thus disdained by destiny or by the sea.

Both the language and the explicit moral force of that idea—central to all Conrad's work—would be outside Hughes's preferences, but in it lies the dramatic and emotional superiority of Conrad's drama, and the likelihood of its remaining the permanent classic on a theme which Hughes has skilfully and often brilliantly expanded but left at the level of a *tour de force*. Yet among the ruck of novels his book is an achievement of keen writing, imagination, and descriptive art, a more than adequate fulfilment of the ten years he took to write it and of the high reputation he earned by his other novel.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

Also in Memoriam

MIRRORS OF VENUS. A NOVEL IN SONNETS. By John Wheelwright. Bruce Humphries. $2.50.

HOW the sonnet has changed! Cummings and others have shattered its form, disjointed its lines. Now another New Englander has stood it on its head. In John Wheelwright's discursive novel in sonnets, the sestets frequently lead, the octaves follow. Not content with these inversions, in instances he builds the sonnet of two sestets knotted with a final couplet, and in one has compressed its seventy-two feet in Alexandrian measure into twelve lines. He also has variously distorted the rhyme schemes. In one case he defers the fourth recurrence of the second rhyme till the last line of the sestet. In another he builds the octave not on rhyme but on woven assonance and coupled dissonance. Still another sonnet is in free verse with crisscross sound patterns. In a fourth the scheme of the two equal parts is muted by false rhymes; and in a fifth the rhymes fall not at the endings but at the commencements of the lines. He takes still other liberties; and as numerical tables marking the schemes flank many of the verses, certain of the pages appear like weird areas of Dürer's "Melancholia."

But Wheelwright for his part needlessly defends his formal innovations. It is his claim that "the original intention of sonnets—the representation of thought with melodic skill—is frustrated by sequences less varied than 'The New Life' of Dante, which includes among its sonnets a ditty, two fragments, and three canzone." Whether this is true or not, distortions of the sonnet form born of inner necessity and not merely as trick and the means of creating a fictitious interest require no defense. They are not only in the spirit of Petrarch, Michelangelo, Spencer, Shakespeare, and Milton, but in that of the sonnet's Provençal and Italian originators. The Gothic spirit which inspired its creators, we all know, formed and ordered feelings not only in accordance with numerical relationships mystically reverenced but with numerical relationships corporeally experienced. Besides ritualistic feeling, at the base of their interweaving sonnet and tercet schemes there

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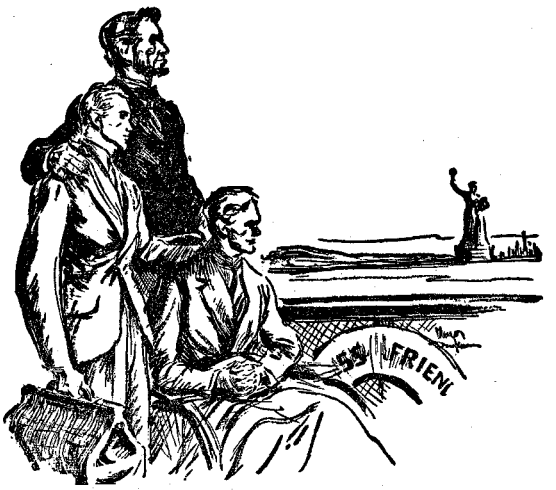

The CONSCIENCE of AMERICA *must answer this appeal!*

ALEXANDER THE GREAT and Bonaparte, Genghis Khan and Caesar, the empires of might and war crumble in dust.

But democracy and freedom, the empire of right and peace, must be built imperishable in the conscience of man!

So thought Abraham Lincoln . . . and died that our government of right and democracy might not perish.

And so thought 3,200 Americans, volunteers in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade . . . who offered to fight—and die, if need be—in Spain, that democracy might not perish by the bombs and bayonets of fascism.

3,200 men! From universities and libraries. From offices and shops. From wealthy homes and humble.

Truly men who loved peace, to whom the bestiality of war was a sickening horror. But men to whom the ruthless, baby-bombing attack of unleashed barbarism against democracy and freedom was more horrible still. Men who could give their limbs and their eyes—yes, their lives!—that *our* ideals and *our* liberties, *our* homes and *our* families, might live in peace!

A week ago came electric news: these American boys would come *home*. Soon they will leave Spain, cross into France, come back to the United States. Some will walk no more, but with crutches. Some will see no more, but with others' eyes. But all will return to the homes and the loves they left, to fight for that right which is more precious than peace.

They will return — but only if YOU make it possible.

The sum needed? $150,000. Barely enough to charter a ship, to provide transportation, food, medical care. But it must be raised soon—*it must be subscribed now!*

We appeal to you; send *your* contribution today —right now. Remember that every dollar helps.

The conscience of America, that conscience in which the ideal of peace and freedom has flourished and grown great, *must* answer this appeal!

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was the new feeling of space and the feeling of the chain dance: above all, the delight in the ability to adjust vitality to *self-imposed* constraints. The form, in other words, fluidly corresponded to the feeling.

And despite their mathematical whiskers, Wheelwright's unconventional sonnets are patently integral, the forms of an experience. Long, in instances singing, in other instances staccato breaths or periods sustained by an individual, racy, infrequently exalted idiom harmoniously compose them; and these harmonies—in some cases somewhat cryptically but in other clearly and fully—convey a fresh grasp of life, particularly of the ways, fortunes, and tragedies of friendship. "The signification of the title is that (as in Burne-Jones's picture) the mirror of Venus reflects loved ones as each would be seen." Indeed, the closest analogy of the quite un-Tennysonian, quite unmellifluous, and humble sequence would still seem to be "In Memoriam"; for the reason that it too laments a dead friend and records, if not a progress from desperate unbelief to faith, at least a growth in faith from what the author terms Immortal Selfhood to what he calls Eternal Solidarity. Among the strongest of the homely sonnets are those which represent this change. Yet the mood of the sequence is grimmer than "In Memoriam's," since together with grief over the loss of a friend it expresses grief over the likelihood that unless the friend die, friendship dies. "Had you not died, our friendship might be dead," the poet groans. Solitude alone preserves solidarity. "None but a God can be his brother's keeper. . . . Quit now of friendship we can never be. Sundered our hearts, but never more our minds." Yet many who can no longer read "In Memoriam" will be able to read with grave interest this very other, and brainy, realistic, and reserved little book of a true poet who also is a loving friend.

PAUL ROSENFELD

Fascist Objective Realities

GOVERNMENT IN FASCIST ITALY. By H. Arthur Steiner. McGraw-Hill Book Company. $1.50.

THE author points out that "there is danger when the democrat is ignorant that his distaste for fascism has blinded him to its objective realities." He opens his book with a description of the holiday celebrations which punctuate the year in Italy. But he says not a word about that system of regimentation through which the Italians are marshaled into displaying their enthusiasm day in and day out. Peter Hutton, an Englishman who is not an innocent, after four months of motoring in northern and central Italy, wrote as follows in the London *Nineteenth Century* last year:

> On such festal occasions everyone receives a ticket, ordering his presence at such and such a place to cheer whoever and whatever may be passing. The tickets are of various colors; red is reserved for special occasions when no excuse for absence will be accepted. In May, when the King-Emperor came to Florence . . . all the peasants for many miles around received the red ticket. Some of them were working after midnight as a result, to make up for their lost days. . . . These extraordinarily numerous public holidays are unpopular.

To tell the truth, even Mr. Steiner is not entirely without suspicion. The foreign observer, he says, does not know "whether the demonstration is a spontaneous outburst of popular applause for the regime, a coolly planned and skilfully executed propaganda display, or a grotesque fraud perpetrated on a gullible public for the benefit of such foreigners as himself." But the author is in a position to state that "a Fascist celebration is all three." I do not understand how it can be at one and the same time a spontaneous outburst, a coolly planned display, and a grotesque fraud. Neither do I understand what "objective realities" the author had in mind when he entitled his chapter on the Fascist demonstrations Historical Forces in Contemporary Italy. Are demonstrations ever historical forces, even if they are authentic and not fraudulent?

While devoting eight pages to Fascist demonstrations, the author neglects to mention the penal islands to which are sent those who "manifest the deliberate intention of opposing" the state authorities, and gives only five lines to the Tribunal for the Defense of the State, saying that it functions "in full secrecy." The "objective reality" is that when the government deems it convenient the trials are given many columns in the daily papers. From February, 1927, to June, 1932, the press gave out information concerning 1,902 persons who received from the tribunal an aggregate of 10,157 years' imprisonment. From July, 1934, to April, 1935, 315 persons were sentenced to terms ranging from one to twenty-two years. But these seem to be less "objective realities" than are street demonstrations.

On page 9 the author states that Mussolini "rises from the masses which he dominates and without whose support he could not long survive." But on page 13 we learn that "for several years the recruits of the Fascist movement represented only outspoken minorities in their respective categories; this is true of the industrialists, politicians, and militarists and probably more true of the workers." How, then, can one say that Mussolini rose from the masses? Are minorities masses? And how can one say at one and the same time that Mussolini "dominates" the masses and that he could not long survive without their "support"? Support is spontaneous consent, while domination is control exercised over unwilling or at least passive people. Which of the two contradictory words covers "objective realities"? Perhaps the "objective reality" is that there is in Italy an organized and armed minority which "supports" Mussolini while it "dominates" the masses in his behalf; there are sections of the population which are content, others which are not content, and others which are indifferent, and there are fluctuations from time to time among these groups. A people does not form a homogeneous block. Of such "objective realities" the author seems never to have had the least suspicion.

Do Italians believe in fascism? "The point is largely irrelevant, since Italians, believing or not, respond" (page 30). What "objective realities" are behind the word "respond"? A chain-gang of prisoners "responds" to its guard, a regiment of soldiers to its colonel, an orchestra to its conductor, classroom pupils to their teacher. It seems that as far as the author is concerned there is no difference between those different ways of "responding." The author adds to his regard for "objective realities" a marked disregard for clear thinking. He should devote himself to Hegelian philosophy.

Mr. Steiner confides to us that he is "unable to divest him-

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self of his affection for democratic and liberal ideas." If I am not mistaken, he has wholly succeeded in divesting himself. A liberal who avows that he is unable to divest himself of his affection for liberal ideas while he dresses up the Fascist point of view as "objective realities," has many chances of being regarded as "unbiased." No wonder that with so many liberals like the author of this book democratic doctrines and institutions are going to rack and ruin all over the world.

GAETANO SALVEMINI

Sholem Asch: Three Novels

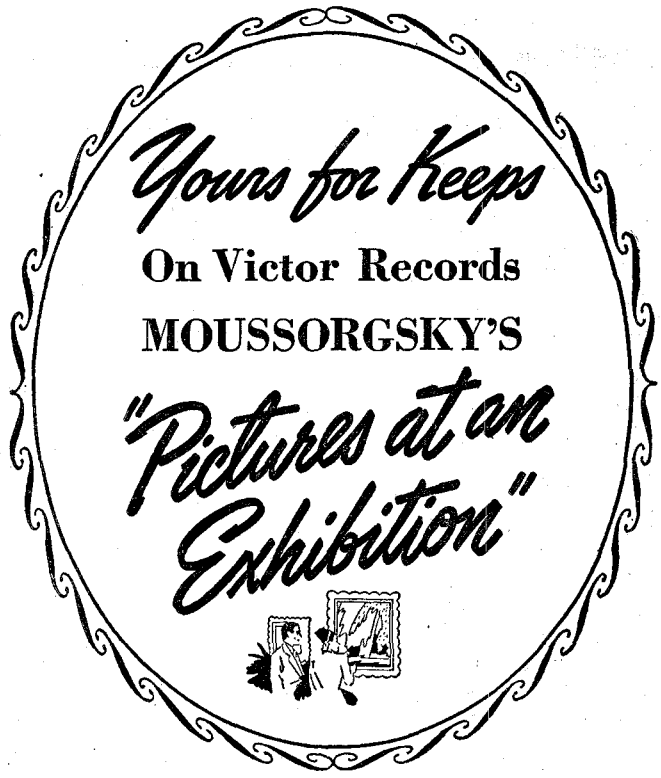
THREE NOVELS: UNCLE MOSES, CHAIM LEDERER'S RETURN, AND JUDGE NOT. By Sholem Asch. Translated from the Yiddish by Elsa Krauch. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.

THE three short novels in this volume were written between 1916 and 1923. Since that time Sholem Asch has become a major novelist, and to say that this early work is indelibly stamped with the temper of its times is not gravely to his discredit. Already it shows some of the characteristics, such as social awareness and colorful portraiture, that have become Asch's greatest assets; and certainly it is far less sentimental than "The Mother." Nevertheless, one is obsessed with the feeling that the point of approach of novelists has changed vastly in the last twenty years, and that none would write today as Asch did then.

This is particularly evident in the first novel, "Uncle Moses." It is typical of the rather stereotyped melting-pot novels that followed the great wave of Jewish immigration to New York. The Jews had been torn from the ancient, static, but intense culture of the ghetto and thrown into a community in which their traditions were burdensome and obstructive. Some made the adjustment and some did not, but in either case the general, superficial, and external aspects of the problem so engrossed Yiddish writers that they had little time for individualities.

Thus Uncle Moses is a flat character, a type. Under the pretext of benevolence he has brought his fellow-townsmen from Kusmin to his tailoring establishment and set up an elaborately paternalistic system. His sweatshop wages are apparently counterbalanced by his fatherly interest in his workers and his assistance in times of crisis; actually, however, he regulates their intimate personal habits for his own welfare. When he is in his sixties he forces Mascha, the young daughter of one of his workers, to marry him. It is on this episode that the novel turns, for his marriage, and the encroachments of trade unionism, undermines his position.

While this material has a certain interest, Asch's treatment of it seems strange. Harry Hansen has pointed out that it is the trend of modern literature to report the environment through the limited apprehensions of a single character, and Bernard DeVoto has added that the intensity of a modern novel depends upon the use of a single means of perception —a central observer—and upon the surrender of the auctorial privilege of omniscience. It is intensity that these three novels lack. In the later stories Asch shows some advance in this respect. The second and best story, "Chaim Lederer's Return," deals with a rich Jew who has retired too soon from



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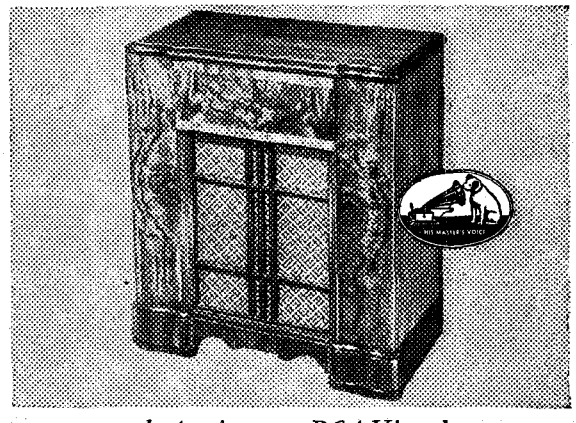

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business. He is bored. His children, ashamed of his East Side habits, push him aside. He would like nothing better than to go and sit with his countrymen in the back room of the factory, but his ambitious son does not consider this dignified. The story starts slowly amid a mass of rationalizations, but when in the later scenes Asch penetrates to Chaim's mind he produces a genuinely moving and effective crisis.

The last story is more modern still, but less effective. From the beginning of the narrative we view the world through the eyes of Max Stone, a modern, cosmopolitan Jew who has made a success of banking. He is trapped into committing murder in the heat of passion. Up to the point of his conviction Stone is treated sympathetically, and the story maintains its intensity. We feel that he is truly a victim of circumstance. But toward the end Asch, apparently in order to damn the world of high finance, suddenly tries to make Stone an unsympathetic character. To do this without ceasing to use Stone as the means of perception, Asch would have us believe that Stone welcomes execution for his sins. He simply is not convincing.

HAROLD STRAUSS

DRAMA

LAST week was one of those—unfortunately not as rare as they might be—when even a drama critic was wisest if he spent most of his evenings at home with a good book. Or, in this case, with two good books: John Mason Brown's discursive "Two on the Aisle" (W. W. Norton, $2.75) and Burns Mantle's compactly informative "Contemporary American Playwrights" (Dodd, Mead, $2.50).

In his preface Mr. Brown confesses that he shares the widespread distrust of the books which journalists compose with paste-pot and scissors. The distrust is healthy but it may be dismissed in the present instance, and for two reasons. In the first place, the very act of sharing it has led Mr. Brown to judge himself so severely that he selects only enough for a very modest-sized volume from the large body of writing he has contributed to the New York *Post* during the ten years he has served it. In the second place, his writing has both a wit and an ebullience which keep it sweet. A number of the short essays are concerned either with productions of standard plays or with the first performances of new works like O'Neill's "Mourning Becomes Electra" and Behrman's "End of Summer," which have an enduring interest. But these are hardly more rewarding than others in which his exuberant account of some foolish play is as entertaining as the occasion for it was dismal.

There are two sorts of critics of the drama: those who know—or think they know—what the theater ought to be, and those who know what it is and has been. Mr. Brown is of the second part. He is appropriately moved and appropriately grateful on those rare occasions when a great actor or a great play transforms it into a temple of art, but he does not like some others sit glumly through the long intervals between such occasions, for he prefers to participate in the lesser pleasures for what they are worth. One might explain

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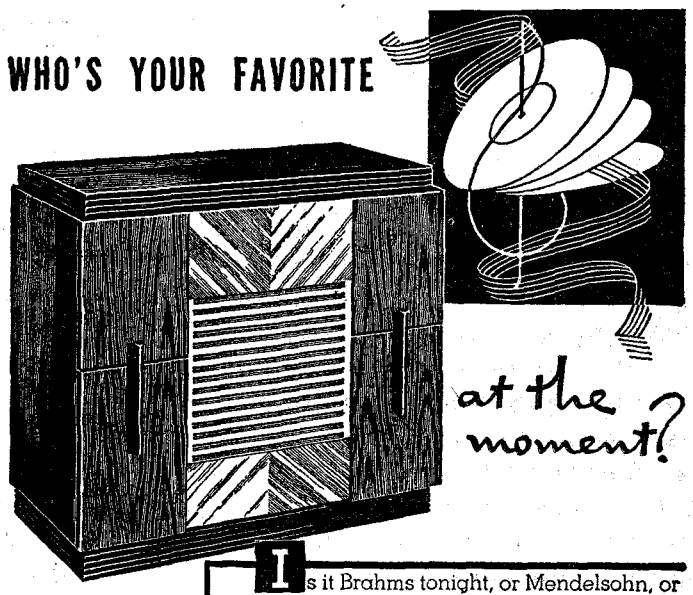
that by saying that he is, among all the New York commentators upon things theatrical, quite the most enduringly stagestruck. But one might also put it in a different way. One might also say that none of the others has so wide an understanding of or so deep a sympathy for what Charles Lamb once called "the cheerful uses of the playhouse." None respects it more not only as a place where great actors act great plays but also as an institution for social entertainment, or an institution whose ministrations to the needs of a great and not always very critical public even a wise man may study with sympathetic interest. Some of his best essays are devoted to an analysis of such great clowns as Ed Wynn and Beatrice Lillie; others, perhaps the most amusing of all, to descriptions (which would be crueler than they are if there were not so much more fun than malice in them) of the lush world of Miss Zoe Akins's imagination or of the inveteracy of Mr. Clayton Hamilton's willingness to leave the subject under discussion in order to bring in a reference to one more great man who once talked to him.

Mr. Brown has also a gift which suggests that of the late Percy Hammond. Unlike Mr. Hammond—whose fatal defect it was to distrust pretensions so thoroughly that he despised them even when they were justified—he can appreciate sincerity and greatness when they are present; but like Mr. Hammond he is master of the telling phrase and, above all, of the irreverant summation. His account of a certain performance of "Antony and Cleopatra" includes a contrast between that play and "Romeo and Juliet" which is as fundamental and meaningful as any I know: "This man and the woman he loves are not in love with love. They are oppressively in love with one another." But that review is introduced by a wisecrack—"Tallulah Bankhead barged down the Nile last night, and sank"—the full ingenuity of which can be appreciated only by those who know and who stop to realize that "barge" as a colloquial verb is as appropriate to Miss Bankhead's manner as the luxurious pleasure craft was to the lady she undertook to impersonate.

Everyone who is concerned with the contemporary theater is already under heavy debt to Mr. Mantle for the annual volumes in which he compiles a record of the preceding theatrical season. The debt is made heavier by the publication of the new "Contemporary American Playwrights," which replaces a somewhat similar volume issued some ten years ago. It includes biographical data and a list of the principal works of more than 300 dramatists, as well as brief, informal critical comments on a large number of the more important or more successful among them. Much of the information is not to be found conveniently elsewhere, and the volume is indispensable.

"The Big Blow" (Maxine Elliott's Theater), the first of the season's Federal Theater productions, concerns itself with the troubles of a family of Nebraska farmers who settle on a sort of Tobacco Road in Florida. The local color is good and so, in a way, is the melodrama, but the latter runs so true to form that one ends by being rather less sure that the faithful Negro servant, the child of nature whom he saves from rape, and the lynching party frustrated at the last moment are a veracious picture of life in Florida than that they are true to a well-established stage convention. There is also



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FALL BOOK ISSUE

A New Feature: Notes by the Way
by *Margaret Marshall*

E. M. Forster
by *Morton Dauwen Zabel*

Edith Wharton's "The Buccaneers"
Reviewed by *Louise Bogan*

"Letters of Henry Adams"
Reviewed by *Odell Shepard*

Helen Woodward's "It's an Art"
Reviewed by *Stuart Chase*

Odell Shepard's "Journals of Bronson Alcott"
Reviewed by *Robert Morss Lovett*

Irving Stone's "Sailor on Horseback"
Reviewed by *Louis Kronenberger*

James T. Farrell's "No Star Is Lost"
Reviewed by *Philip Blair Rice*

"Letters of Lincoln Steffens"
Reviewed by *Oswald Garrison Villard*

Literary Cartoon by *William Steig*

Next Week in *The Nation*

Will you join Louis Bromfield, Langdon W. Post, a group of others and me for dinner at the Commodore Hotel on Tuesday, October 18th, at 6:30 P.M.?

An emergency situation has arisen with regard to all the Americans now serving in Spain who unselfishly volunteered for the cause of the Spanish Republic. It also affects hundreds of their buddies wounded in the fight for democracy.

Louis Bromfield, outstanding American novelist, who is in charge of the Paris Committee, and who will return to this country in time to attend this dinner, will speak on the measures to be taken to meet this critical situation.

Sincerely,

Stephen Vincent Benet

Chairman, City Campaign Committee

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something a bit fortuitous in the opportune arrival of the storm which not only saves the Negro but proves that the settler from the outside world was right when he disregarded the jeers of the shiftless crackers and built a house of logs. The big bad tornado huffed and he puffed but he couldn't blow *that* house down. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Film Note

"THE STORY OF A CHEAT" is engaging knavery, moues, winks, gestures, and brazen mugging, executed mostly by Sacha Guitry in the dozen guises of his enactment of his own novel, "Le Roman d'un Tricheur." Except for a few moments of dialogue, the footage itself is shot like a silent; but Guitry has added an insinuating commentary, so that the whole becomes a picaresque autobiography. Since the screen record alone, with a few of John Erskine's superimposed titles, makes a complete narrative, Guitry's voice is released from synchronous duty and flicks over sundry other things, returning at times even to criticize his own acting.

Though it pretends to be a sympathetic account of the life of a card sharp, the chief charge of the film is released in little static shocks of subtle distinction—which in the end are not distinctions at all but trivialities of taste, sustained only by the spice of an epigram and as obvious as the variations of a beard whereby the hero accomplishes his cheating. The film is so focused on Guitry that it is *lèse majesté* to assign credit elsewhere; but more effective than the entendres of his voice is the masterful use of a novel cinematic device to support the easy amorality of the narrative. Time after time the camera swivels lightly between life and death, palace and hovel, wife and mistress, will and chance, good and evil. Where the guards of Monaco are shown marching forward, the reel is reversed and they parade backward. Backward, forward, right, left, it is all the same. It is precisely in the discernment of such options and in the easy swiveling of moral judgment between them that the scandalous essence of Guitry is distilled. SIDNEY KAUFMAN

RECORDS

THERE has been no satisfactory version of one of Brahms's finest works, his Fourth Symphony; and it is a pleasure to discover that Weingartner's new Columbia set (five records, $7.50) offers an excellent performance excellently recorded (but oh, those surfaces!). What is excellent and effective in the performance is its simplicity and sobriety, manifested in its steadiness of pace. These qualities have made Weingartner's old version of Brahms's First preferable to Stokowski's recent one, which inflates unbearably what is inflated in the work to start with; and Weingartner's remains, I think, preferable to the latest version (five records, $7.50) made for Victor by Bruno Walter.

Bloch's magnificent Sonata for violin and piano, which was first recorded by Gamut last year, is now issued by Victor in an impressive performance by Josef Gingold and Beryl Rubinstein (3½ records, $5.75) that has the advantage of

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superior recording. And Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" is now to be had in a new orchestration by Caillet played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy (four records, $8). The English horn that Caillet uses for "The Old Castle" turns out to be exactly right; I have never been able to see anything in this picture that required the saxophone Ravel used; and I have suspected a mere desire to shock, which betrayed a judgment and taste that were at all other points unerring and superior to Caillet's. Listen to Caillet's handling of Schmuyle and then to Ravel's, or compare what they do with a detail like the cry of the chicks, and you will appreciate how much the greater master Ravel is—with how much greater fineness he uses his colors, and with how much greater point and wit. This may be said also of Koussevitzky's performance as compared with Ormandy's; and its superior quality is still apparent on the old records.

The Ormandy performance and recording of this work are opulent; but what Ravel does to Caillet Stokowski does to Ormandy with his new set of Borodin's Dances from "Prince Igor" (two records, $4.50). The marvelous sounds from these records offer breath-taking evidence of Stokowski's extraordinary talents for the technical side of conducting; and the performance offers evidence of his powers as an interpreter of music without, for once, any disturbing evidence of his weaknesses.

Leonore's great aria from the first act of "Fidelio," sung by Flagstad with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy (one record, $2), suffers from recording that is over-brilliant and harsh. And there is a similar fault in Szigeti's Columbia recording of a Tartini Concerto (two records, $3) that I do not find interesting. The Bach Sonata for harpsichord and viola da gamba that is well played by Messrs. Wolff and Scholz on another Columbia two-record set ($3) is for the more fanatical lovers of Bach's exercises in instrumental writing. But Beethoven's Serenade for string trio is one of the most charming of his works in the eighteenth-century feeling and style; and to the excellent performance by Goldberg, Hindemith, and Feuermann is now added a beautifully polished one by the Pasquier Trio (three records, $5).

Victor has issued in two volumes ($22) all of Chopin's Nocturnes played by Artur Rubinstein. It is in these works that one finds the personal weakness and morbidity which are considered peculiarly Chopin's, and in some of them the weakness extends even to the invention; nevertheless there are among them things as fine, of their kind, as Opus 15 and Opus 27, and the superb Opus 48 No. 1. I am speaking of the music; but there is also the performance of the music—or rather the traditional performance, which is based on the belief that if a composer has a weakness the thing to do is to exaggerate it. I don't accept that belief, and I dislike the kind of performance—of Chopin and Tchaikovsky—it results in. Chopin's music being what it is, I think it should be played as unaffectedly as possible; and for this reason I like Godowsky's performances in the Columbia set of the Nocturnes better than most of Rubinstein's. Godowsky also omits several of the weakest specimens; but with these he omits Opus 48 No. 1; and as it happens Rubinstein does a magnificent job with this one. And Rubinstein's performances gain by marvelous recording of the sound of his piano.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Self-Determination Origins

Dear Sirs: When two writers in the same number of *The Nation* make the same historical error, and when Louis Fischer fails to give the Communists the credit that belongs to them, somebody ought to speak up.

Wilson did not originate "self-determination." The idea is perfectly explicit in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, where all Americans (including, by Aristotelian logic, Wilson) got their introduction to it. It was not put into the Declaration as a new invention but as being already a standard principle in the discussion of British constitutionalism, so that a reference to it was to give the Declaration the tactical advantage of orthodoxy.

The word "self-determination" was started, so far as I know, by the Communists and their associates in the Zimmerwald conference of 1915. In the Russian Revolution it became, even under Kerensky, Russian orthodoxy. The Germans thereupon took it up as a convenient *ad hominem* point against Russia in all their moves to disintegrate Russia into fragments that should have no military power. They raised the shout so loudly that in the eyes of the world it began to pass for a German slogan. Then, just as the Germans had taken the word up to use against Russia on the ground that the Russians were already committed to accept it, so Wilson took it up out of the mouths of the Germans as a weapon against which the Germans had no defense because they were already committed to accept it. Wilson, as a disciple of the Declaration of Independence, had the advantage that he could profess the principle with sincerity, as the Germans had never done. The rest of the world caught it from Wilson; but that does not mean that it started with him.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON

Ballard Vale, Mass., October 3

Warning to the Americas

Dear Sirs: The sinister significance of recent events in Central Europe and their lesson for North Americans (and South Americans) seem to have escaped many commentators. The decisions reached at Munich last week did not register a "surrender" by allegedly democratic governments to dictator states. They indicated something more ominous—the deliberate and long-premeditated cooperation of four fascist governments which have for the moment united on a common objective—the organization of Western Europe for war against the Soviet Union.

For North Americans, including the most rabid isolationists and conservatives, the simple fact of a fascist Western Europe, in control of powerful navies and air fleets, changes the whole defense outlook. It seems to this observer that the people of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, while maintaining the closest possible contact with those progressive elements which are struggling against fascism in Britain, France, and other European nations, should consider the urgent necessity of closer relations with both Soviet Russia and China. America and Asia together will need all their strength to extinguish fascism. If we do not help our friends now, this continent may be in dire need, and friendless, before this century is much older.

H. K. SMALL

Toronto, Ont., October 1

Immoral and Stupid

Dear Sirs: It seems to me that the betrayal of Czechoslovakia marks the defeat of a philosophy which for centuries has been inculcated in the children of the Western world by the schools, the churches, and the homes. One was brought up to believe that injustice was wrong because every life—whether that of a private person or of a nation—would be a failure if based on it. One's mode of doing business was based on the concept that honor was practical. One believed it a duty to bring up children to be good—to stick to their word and be outraged by evil.

What philosophy is to guide our thinking and our conduct now? Instead of being praised Chamberlain and Daladier are to be cursed. They have given Hitler all he needs to destroy what we were taught to believe in.

If Hitler was sincere in his emotion over the Germans of Sudetenland, why could not the problem have been solved as was solved the similar problem that arose between Turkey and Greece—by exchange of their minorities?

The four-power pact signed in Munich is immoral and stupid. Can anything worse be said of any man's work?

JOHN M. LADD

Madison Heights, Va., October 6

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933.

Of *The Nation*, published weekly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1938.

STATE OF NEW YORK } ss.:
COUNTY OF NEW YORK }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Hugo Van Arx, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and said that he is the business manager of *The Nation*, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are: Publisher: The Nation, Inc., 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Editor, Freda Kirchwey, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Business Manager, Hugo Van Arx, 20 Vesey Street, New New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor, M. R. Bendiner.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholder owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and addresses, as well as those of each individual member must be given.) The Nation, Inc., 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.; Freda Kirchwey, 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is. (This information is required from daily publications only.)

HUGO VAN ARX,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September, 1938. R. B. COUSINS.

(My commission expires March 30, 1939.)
(Seal)

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